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# **Rethinking the Philosophical Approach to Higher Education in Ghana**

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A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy in Education.

University of Auckland

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## Abstract

This study investigates how higher education [H.E] at a university level in Ghana can serve a public purpose (the common good of society). The study uses a qualitative mode of inquiry with a critical studies approach. It further utilises autobiography to investigate what it means to be educated in Ghana – this approach locates the researcher in the study. An extended literature review is utilised to illustrate the main features of historical development of H.E in Ghana. Semi-structured interviews were employed to help gather empirical data in order to answer questions as to how H.E in Ghana is elitist; the alternative means of funding H.E in Ghana; and the possible future of H.E in Ghana. Given that the framework of Ghana’s H.E is a legacy of the British colonial heritage, broad based anti-colonial persuasions of Franz Fanon, Kwame Nkrumah, Aimé Césaire, Leopold Sedar Senghor and Marcus Garvey were utilised. Specifically, the anti-colonial theorisation by Simmons and Dei (2012), which draws from the works of the above-mentioned theorists was adopted as a framework to argue that Western notions of H.E dislocate the highly schooled Ghanaian historically, spiritually, aesthetically, socio-politically and ethically. The thesis finds that the basis for conceptualising an “educated” person in Ghana is the acquisition of European values and outlooks. Further, whereas the main feature of traditional African H.E focuses on the cultivation of ethical values to nurture character in order to enhance a person’s humanity, the greater possibilities for employability is the main concentration of Ghanaian universities. Even though the extent of elitism in Ghanaian universities has reduced, the pre-eminence given to Western worldviews and perspectives and the restricted access to medical sciences and business programmes remain strands of elitism. The study reveals the need for universities to generate useable knowledge through a connection between H.E institutions and society to enhance the prospects of funding. The future possibilities of H.E are both bleak and bright depending on the trajectory universities adopt. Overall, the findings suggest that for H.E to serve a public purpose in Ghana, it must be localised and based on Ghanaian/African epistemological, ontological and axiological worldviews.

## Declaration

I certify that this thesis is my original work carried out through research. Where I used other people's views and quotes, I duly acknowledged them. This work has not been presented in whole or in part to any other institution for an award of any degree.

.....

Delali Amuzu  
(Student)

.....

Professor John Morgan  
(Supervisor)

.....

Dr. Kirsten Locke  
(Supervisor)

## **Dedication**

I dedicate this work to the soldiers of the African revolution and the shunned African Ancestors who laid the foundations of the world's systems of knowledge.

## Acknowledgements

I praise Almighty Mawusogbolisa for the tenacity and grace to embark on this journey. I appreciate my supervisors, Professor John Morgan and Dr. Kirsten Locke for the guidance, criticisms and offering the ‘technical eye’ needed to shape this study. It was great to have you as supervisors, thank you.

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## **Preface**

The desire for a worthy education and discussions on education (schooling) tend to elicit passionate reactions from Ghanaians. The university, being the apex of the school system, wield enormous value in Ghana due to opportunities it offered in the past, the anticipated prospects and promises for the future. On the other hand, what constitutes meaningful education (schooling) has engaged many governments, academic institutions, policy makers and implementers post-independence; albeit the search for a worthwhile system of schooling continues. Educational transformation in Ghana has largely bordered on the content of education (more Mathematics, English and Science), length of schooling and skills acquisition. What is yet to attract serious attention is the philosophy of education (mind-set, framework or deep-thought ground on which education must operate). Fundamental questions like what is education (schooling), what it means to be educated, why education, and how to design the schooling experience seem to lack critical examination. Furthermore, the realisation that schooling in Ghana at all levels does not reflect Ghanaian/African culture seems to have been taken for granted, thus given insignificant attention. Currently, what constitutes a good education is business as usual – sustaining the colonial heritage (“education for livelihood – not education for life”). Ghanaians are keen seekers of international education with parents striving to send their wards to schools in America and Europe or satellite campuses in Ghana for “European education”. Though problematic, this conversation does not have a public airing even though the dialogues on decolonising education is held in small circles amongst friends, occasionally in the media and within some university faculties. However, it has not received enough attention to initiate a greater level of deliberation to instigate the change needed. This thesis seeks to initiate a conversation to engender such a debate around the nature of H.E needed in Ghana.

## **Section One: Purpose and Theoretical Framework of the Study**

### **Chapter One: Introduction**

#### **Overview**

This thesis argues that higher education (H.E) (university) in Ghana is colonial because it is imposing and domineering (Simmons & Dei, 2012), and “reinforces exclusive notions of belonging, difference and superiority” (Principe cited in Dei, 2006 p.3). It will be argued that Western notions of H.E that have supplanted traditional African education structures and notions of H.E lack the cultural worldview to meet the aspirations of Ghana. Western aims based on individualism, competition and exploitation introduced through colonialism differ from traditional African notions of collectivism, collaboration and interdependency. A realignment of the purpose of H.E is necessary to confer meaningful outcomes to Ghana, and preserve the relevance of H.E to Ghanaian society. The study reveals that H.E in Ghana must be localised and established on African knowledge systems (in agriculture, sciences, education) and realities (social, economic, spiritual circumstances) to be meaningful and offer the agency to serve a public purpose.

# Africa

Image taken from the internet



Picture 1

Map of Africa (University of Texas, 2011)

In this section, an overview of Africa is presented, arguing that, in spite of Africa's massive geography consisting of diverse countries, Africans share similar cultural worldviews though these are differently expressed. There is homogeneity regarding belief in the Supreme Being, ancestors, family, name, birth, death, and their roles in the affairs of humanity. In Ghana for instance, it is customary to name a child on the seventh or eighth day depending on the ethnic group. The evidence of cultural heritage is still alive among Africans globally. For instance, a blend of traditional African spiritual systems persists in Brazil called Candomble – a blend of traditional Bantu, Fon, and Yoruba spiritual systems. Vodun in Haiti (same pronunciation in Benin, Togo and Ghana by the Ewe) operates within the Fon spiritual system. Jamaicans call their African spiritual system Obeah and in Trinidad it is Sango Baptise. In Cuba it is known as Lukumi/Santeria. The African cultural concord leads Diop (cited in Higgs, 2008) to profess that "...there is a profound cultural unity still alive beneath the deceptive appearance of cultural heterogeneity present in Africa, which gives rise to the contents of an indigenous African knowledge system" (p. 451). Karenga (cited in Nketsia, 2013) recommends that "history, religion (spirituality and ethics), social organization, economic organization, political organisation, creative production (art, music, literature, dance, etc.) and ethos" (p. 732) are central cultural tenets necessary for African-centred development.

Referring to higher education, Sawyerr (2004), a former General Secretary of Association of African Universities (2003–2008), proffers that the schema of European colonial education was identical during the colonial era in Africa. The similar consequences of this shared history and future possibilities influenced the conference "African H.E Summit: Revitalising H.E for Africa's Future" held in Dakar, Senegal in March, 2015 to define an agenda for African H.E. Elsewhere, the comparable plight of Africans worldwide found the African Union's recognition of the African diaspora (Africans who live outside the continent due to deliberate migration, colonialism or enslavement) as the sixth region of Africa. This accounts for Haiti's acceptance into the African Union.

Nkrumah (1973c) encourages African scholars to collaborate, binding their similarities and striving to make meaning of their differences:

Your meeting here today as Africanists from various countries of the world, is truly historic. It emphasizes the idea that knowledge transcends political and national boundaries. It is incumbent upon all Africanist scholars, all over the world, to work for



a complete emancipation of the mind from all forms of domination, control and enslavement. (p. 212)

In line with Nkrumah's exposition, the study explores academic literature on culture and H.E across Africa, and where necessary, make the case of Ghana.

Image taken from the internet



Picture 2

Map of Ghana (University of Texas, 2007)

### **Brief History of Gold Coast (Ghana)**

The study area, Ghana, is briefly introduced in this section. The earliest recorded European contact in Ghana was in 1471 by the Portuguese to trade in gold. Due to the abundance of gold, Europeans named Ghana “Gold Coast”. The Dutch, Swedes, Danes and Germans subsequently joined in this venture. Forts and castles put up to facilitate trade became dungeons to transport people for enslavement in the West. The British formally colonised Gold Coast in 1874. Independence came on 6<sup>th</sup> March 1957 and the country was renamed Ghana: the name taken from an ancient African empire (400–120 AD) situated around the river Niger. The current population is 24.4 million and the major exports are gold, cocoa, oil and diamonds. Ghana’s capital city is Accra.

### **Image taken from the internet**



**Picture 3**

Ghana Flag (Government of Ghana, ND)

## **Symbolism of the flag**

Red: blood and toil of our ancestors

Gold: mineral wealth of the country

Green: rich vegetation

Black Star: symbolism of African unity and emancipation (a symbol of Marcus Garvey'

Universal Negro Improvement Association – this is discussed in Chapter Two)

## **Schooling**

Basic Education: six years of primary schooling and three years junior high school (Ghana's Constitution stipulates free universal basic education)

Secondary: Three years

Polytechnic: Three years (Higher National Diploma) – some are currently (from 2016) being converted to technical universities.

University: Four years (Bachelors)

## **Background to the Study**

The role of education as a mechanism to nurture human resources for development cannot be underestimated. Education in different societies over the centuries has attempted to employ knowledge, skills and attitudes within their cultural perspectives to enhance ways of life. However, what constitutes education in Ghana is the remainder of an over 200-year-old legacy of British colonialism (Tefe, 2012). Africans have had philosophies and approaches to education since antiquity and the vestiges of the notions of education have survived among Africans. Marah (2006) contends that indigenous education in Africa was aimed at nurturing character in line with accepted cultural norms and values. Its emphasis was social, and helped in transgenerational transfer of cultural heritage. Therefore, prior to European conquest in the 15<sup>th</sup> century onwards, Africans had adequate notions of education to function in their environment. Ocitti (1973), a former Dean of the Faculty of Education and Humanity at Makerere University in Uganda states that like any good system of education, it had its objectives, scope and methods that clearly reflected cultural patterns. Ocitti therefore insists that “a total rejection of the African heritage will leave African societies in a vacuum that can



only be filled with confusion, loss of identity, and a total break in intergenerational communication” (p. 105).

The nature of education introduced by Christian missionaries and institutionalised through colonialism reoriented African notions of H.E. H.E became what Peters (2007, p. 56) describes as “education and extrinsic ends” – that is, primarily economic. Rodney (2009) argues that Western H.E ventures lacked knowledge of self and were misaligned with African aspirations. However, it was successful due to colonial military might, advancing scientific ventures, and co-opting local actors into a system of education that sustains the master-slave relationship. As a result, the highly schooled become the enslavers, enslaving the citizenry. They become *indigenous colonisers practising indigenous colonialism*.

Whereas traditional notions of education closely incorporated all aspects of society (Achebe, 2008; Marah, 2006; Nukuya 2003), Ghanaian historian, Nketsia (2013) argues that H.E and the Western concept of schooling is disconnected and has little relevance to Ghanaian society. McCain (1979) states that H.E was peripheral to the aims of British colonialism and academic courses were not designed to activate social development in Ghana. However, academic certificates led to social mobility. Nukunya (2003) posits that people cherished academic advancements due to the privileges it conferred. Since H.E offered an avenue to escape traditional professions like farming and fishing, the lure of these new opportunities increased a desire for schooling. The traditional African systems of H.E remained on the margins due to insignificant efforts to improve them. Nketsia (2013) therefore contends that highly schooled Africans are torn between two loyalties and worlds: the bait of Eurocentric ideals characterised by individualism, which is emphasised in school; and the compulsion to remain faithful to African traditions, which frown on values of individualism. To Tefe (2012), the ultimate motivation for H.E in Ghana/Africa is not a preparation towards service, but possession of power (economic, social and political) over those with little or no schooling – power expressed in a manner of the victor over vanquished. These power relations exemplify the legacy of colonialism and the kind of civilisation it bestowed.

The neglect of the social functions of H.E contributes to the failure to discern meaningful solutions to a myriad of challenges in Ghana. The universities nonetheless maintain their promise as the surest way to economic advancement. However, Hutchins (1991), a former Chancellor of the University of Chicago, cautions:

The dangers that will come upon us through the frustration of educated people who have got educated in the expectation that education will get them a better job, and who then fail to get it. But surely this depends on the representations that are made to the young about what education is. If we allow them to believe that education will get them better jobs and encourage them to get educated with this end in view, they are entitled to a sense of frustration if, when they have got the education, they do not get the jobs. (p. 14)

Hutchins' assertion, albeit aimed at Americans, has significance for Ghana where H.E institutions extol promises of a good job. These frustrations that Hutchins mentions reflect in the assertions of a former Vice Chancellor of the University of Ghana. Professor Ernest Aryeetey acknowledges 50% of university graduates in Ghana will be jobless at least two years after university (myjoyonline, 2011).

Plato's *Republic* (2000) highlights the dangers associated with pursuing tasks for mislaid purposes. Socrates argues that when people engage in an art (for instance medicine) for its primary interest, they tend to act with virtue and wisdom in their desire to perfect the art. Conversely, when pursued for its extrinsic benefits, selfish, unjust, reckless, dishonest, and corrupt attitudes are likely to manifest. While money cannot assume primacy for any art, it has become the primary purpose for almost all arts in Ghana. In Tefe's (2012) view, although African culture frowns on dishonesty and corruption, they have become openly accepted and practised. Ozumba (1992) on his part attributes the corruption and violence to a system of education that perpetuates autocratic and mechanistic values. Kanpol (1994) therefore describes the African educational systems as pitilessly rooted in pedagogy for sycophancy.

The schooling system disrupts African patterns of life and positions beneficiaries as actors in a broader system of exploitation. The highly schooled African functions in a "democratic" and world economic system usually without any deep understanding of the ideals that shape them. According to Tefe (2012), this process of adopting such ideals contributes to the dysfunctional attitudes of university graduates, which includes an unwillingness to provide service without immediate reward. The attributes are symptoms of education void of quality in substance and direction in purpose.

The need to rethink the philosophies and purposes of H.E in Ghana remains crucial and interrogating the *why*, *what*, and *how* of H.E becomes uncompromising. Africans have been

accused for centuries of being barbaric, of having no culture, of being primitive and devoid of civilisation. Over time, these narratives consume African consciousness and instigate self-hate. In addition, the metaphors and symbols inherited from colonialism continue to shape reality and through institutions (H.E inclusive) further occupy the subconscious. The necessity to interrogate these outlooks is imperative both for the relevance and sustainability of H.E.

### **Possible Effects of the Economic Emphasis of H.E**

Given the economic emphasis on Ghana's H.E, the immediate disposition of most beneficiaries of H.E is how to recoup the financial investments made in education. This contributes to the high sense of entitlement the highly schooled hold. While society expects an increase in the economic status of the highly schooled, there is also the scale of remuneration that favours those at the apex of organisational structures (normally from top managerial positions). In other instances, wages are unfavourable across the board, and for the highly schooled to manifest their economic "superiority", some engage in illicit activities. It is not surprising that the World Bank claims that \$20–\$40bn, equivalent to 20–40% of official development assistance, is lost to corrupt public officials in developing countries (World Bank, as cited by Ghana News Agency, 2013). Alsup puts the figure at \$148bn yearly, which is more than 25% of Africa's GDP (Alsup, as cited by Ghana News Agency, 2013). In Ghana, a special presidential taskforce disclosed a monthly revenue loss of more than \$150m at Tema Harbour (allafrica, 2013). Another taskforce uncovered 700 million cedis (then about \$350m) worth of fraud at bonded warehouses in Ghana (myjoyonline, 2013).

According to Tonah (2009), several reviews and three major education reforms have occurred in Ghana in 1961, 1967 and 1987. These were not specifically directed at H.E. Despite these efforts, "The search for an 'ideal' education system for Ghana has, however, remained illusive [sic]" (p. 45). I contended that these reforms and reviews did not sufficiently interrogate and alter the colonial vestiges in (higher) education. Indeed, the concerns regarding the colonial foundations of education in Africa have been prevalent. For instance, Nyerere (1975) asserts that:

Africa has not really given much thought to the problem of education. We know, or we think we know, that something called "education" is a good thing. And all African states therefore spend a large proportion of government revenue on it. But I sometimes suspect

that, for us in Africa, the underlying purpose of education is to turn us into Black Europeans—or Black Americans. I say this because our educational policies make it quite clear that we are really expecting education in Africa to enable us to emulate the material achievements of Europe and America. That is the object of our activity. (p. 3)

### **Statement of the Problem**

The need for decolonising Ghanaian H.E has had some attention. Dr. Tony Aidoo, former Head of Government of Ghana’s Policy Monitoring and Evaluation Unit and current Ambassador to Netherlands (2014–2016), argues that a setback in Ghana’s education sector is due to a lack of a philosophical foundation (Arku, 2014). While Dr. Emmanuel Akwetey, the Executive Director of the Institute for Democratic Governance (IDEG), observes that corruption is becoming a cultural problem in Ghana (Abbey, 2013), Dr. Patrick Awuah, President of Ashesi University College, advocates a public-oriented focus to H.E in Ghana. To Awuah, corruption is consuming Africa hence the need to educate succeeding generations of leaders in good moral principles and selflessness (Ghana News Agency, 2013). John Dramani Mahama, former President of Ghana (2010–2016), acknowledges the need for transformation and notes that, “we are challenged to produce the calibre of graduates who are critical thinkers to confront challenges” (Ghana News Agency, 2013). Dei (2002) contends that colonising tendencies grant false prestige to the colonised through Eurocentric worldviews while demeaning indigenous episteme. The need for a conversation on the trajectory of Western H.E in Ghana thus becomes vital especially when, for over sixty years, its process, content, method and goals display cultural paradigms of its colonial heritage. It is important for H.E in Ghana to underscore the issues that connect and enhance African humanity.

In light of the discussion held thus far, this research seeks to ask: how can H.E in Ghana serve a public purpose?

### ***Research Questions***

1. What does it mean to be educated in Ghana?
2. What are the main features of the historical development of H.E in Ghana?
3. How elitist is H.E in Ghana?
4. What are the alternative means of funding H.E in Ghana?

## 5. What is the possible future of H.E in Ghana?

### **Significance of the Study**

This study is significant in many ways. First, it suggests the need for a paradigm shift in H.E in Ghana in order to enhance its relevance to Ghanaian society. The study advocates for an African-centred perspective as this offers the means by which Ghanaians/Africans can create and accept a vision of Self. This would help reorient Ghanaians towards an alternate paradigm.

The study also attempts to reiterate the Ghanaian/African social functions of H.E since the non-economic questions seem to escape attention of Ghana's academe and policy makers. As we will find out in subsequent chapters, H.E in Ghana appears to sustain its colonial economic-based foundations. As a result, students are synonymous with customers, much like that of graduate and employee. It is short-sighted for H.E to primarily prepare people for jobs and become a subsidiary of industries and corporations. This approach has not augured well for Ghana as it decouples education from society.

The study contributes to the conversation on the need for decolonising H.E in Ghana. It critiques the status quo to awaken consciousness needed to decolonise. Africa is accused of lacking good leadership (World Bank, 2000; Allotey, 2016), hence it is essential to examine the institutions that create and bequeath these undesirable leaders to societies.

### **Why H.E? A Top-Down Approach**

I acknowledge that the foundation of the school system (beyond H.E) in Ghana is problematic. However, I chose to focus on H.E because of its immediate influence on education and society at different levels. H.E cultivates teachers at all levels, develops policy drafters, implementers and evaluators. The immediate influence of H.E is unequalled; therefore, an awakening in this sector would inevitably trickle down to other levels of education to achieve a holistic result.

### **Rationale for the Study**

As will be illustrated in Chapter Five, I went through primary school to university to have a decent future – it was not for life but for employment. After university, I knew little of myself

except that Africans have had a long history of being classified as primitive and many problems have arisen due to this particular colonial lens. Since the focus of schooling was not really the pursuit of knowledge but the quest for certification, the desire to *know* was not profound. However, I love reggae music and any lover of roots reggae would attest to its political nature and African-centeredness. It debunks dominant worldviews, discusses the “politics of knowledge” (how European perspectives tend to be the basis of knowledge validation, accordingly it holds a position of prominence), and confronts and attempts to explain Africa/Africans’ disparaging representations. I nurtured the interest to dig into African history and realised the contradictions in what I studied in university – especially at an undergraduate level – for instance that civilisation started in Greece. I chanced on the works of George Sefa Dei, a Professor at the University of Toronto and started reading about colonial education. This led me to works by Molefi Kete Asante, a Professor at Temple University; I started to draw meaning out of my confusion. I found it necessary to contribute to H.E transformation in both Ghana and in Africans by extension through this study.

### **Organisation of the Study**

The study is grouped into six sections. Section One entails Purpose and Theory and involves Chapter One, which includes the introduction and background to the study. Chapter Two explores the theoretical framework of the study based broadly on the anti-colonial theorisations of Franz Fanon, Kwame Nkrumah, Aime Cesaire, Leopold Sedar Senghor and Marcus Garvey. Specifically, the study employs as framework, the anti-colonial theorisation by Simmons and Dei (2012) which draws on the aforementioned theorists. I present post-colonial theory and anti-colonial theory and justify my adoption of Simmons and Dei’s (2012) anti-colonial theory primarily because the latter offers more agency toward decolonisation. The principal characters (like Fanon, Nkrumah, Aime Cesaire, Leopold Sedar Senghor etc.) on whom the post and anti-colonial theorisations rest, fought against imperialism and colonialism. Therefore, I contend that theorisation against imperialism or colonialism should project some resistance, urgency and agency.

The Research Design is captured in Section Two and presented starting with Chapter Three, which outlines reasons for the employing autobiography, extended literature review and fieldwork as methods to answer the research questions. This study is qualitative and within the domain of critical studies (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). Autobiography is employed

because it locates me in the study and offers an insight into the nature of education and H.E in Ghana. Extended literature review allows me to bring other perspectives to the study, for instance, the historical accounts of education in Ghana/Africa, ancestral voice in the form of proverbs and the views of early African leaders/scholars. The fieldwork provides an opportunity to contribute empirically to the study.

Section Three entails Contexts of the Study and covers Chapters Four and Five. Chapter Four explores the historical development of H.E in Ghana and H.E is traced, from an African perspective, through the colonial era (early-to-mid 1900s) and post-independence (1960 to present). While the traditional African, Islamic and European education systems had a religious basis, the focus of the religions differed resulting in different kinds of education. Whereas traditional African education emphasises the cultivation of ethical values to nurture character in order to enhance a person's humanity, the Western education system introduced through colonialism in Ghana, centres on preparing people for work. Therefore, the traditional African education and schooling in Ghana, respectively have social and economic emphasis. I discuss traditional African education, what it means, its purposes, manifestations and scope, further arguing that education is for the general good and sustenance of society. I highlight central themes of traditional African H.E like respect for humanity, unity in action, collectivism, a sense of community and communality, ethics, spirituality, togetherness, collaborations and selflessness, which I contend when infused into the university system would make H.E in Ghana more meaningful.

Chapter Five illustrates what it means to be educated in Ghana. I employ autobiography as a method to present my experiences through schooling in Ghana. I argue that, overall, the schooling process tends to confer colonial values of exclusivity and a sense of superiority to the highly schooled over those with little or no schooling. Thus, schooling in Ghana is a sustenance of the colonial legacy. Furthermore, I employ a sub-culture in Commonwealth Hall, University of Ghana known as "Vandalism" to explain how a traditional Ghanaian outlook to life is conveyed into the structures of a Western university setup to achieve quite a traditional Ghanaian outlook to life and H.E. Commonwealth Hall as an institution confronts the sense of exclusivity and superiority the H.E tends to confer. The Hall acts in unity for the common good in its activities. Some lessons can be drawn from this sub-culture to help nurture the sense of community needed in Ghanaian H.E.

Section Four contains the Empirical Aspects of the Study (the responses from the fieldwork) and consists of Chapter Six, Seven, Eight and Nine. Chapter Six focuses on how elitist H.E is in Ghana. The main question this chapter focuses on is: How elitist is H.E in Ghana? Ideas on elitism are frequently used in connection with Ghana's H.E. For example, Ghana's first President, Kwame Nkrumah (1973c) accused the University of Ghana of elitism. A former Executive Director of the National Council for Tertiary Education, Professor Duwiejua Mahama, states that admissions to Ghana's universities are elitist (GNA, 2015). Similarly, the Upper-East Regional Director of Ghana Health Service, Awoonor-Williams also indicts the Ghana Medical Council of elitism because the study of medicine has become exclusive to a select few (Awoonor-Williams, 2013). Despite these claims, what constitutes elitism is vague and hardly conceptualised in Ghana. Therefore, I first sought respondents to conceptualise elitism before finding out how elitist universities are in Ghana. Their conceptualisations are unintended findings of the study.

Chapter Seven illustrates how it is possible to inculcate community service oriented values in H.E. As discussed in Chapter Four, the public purpose (the common good of society) is fundamental to traditional African education. However, even though Ghana's national anthem and the University of Ghana's anthem reiterate the importance of the public purpose in Ghana's H.E, universities have struggled to attain this cause. Nketsia (2013) and Nkrumah (1973c) for instance, accuse universities of self-centred attributes devoid of the common good. Furthermore, Higgs (2003), Achebe (2008), Nukunya (2003), Gwanfogbe (2011), Tangwa (2011), and Balogun (2008) argue that H.E in Africa lacks community oriented values. I align with these remarks based on my experience through school in Ghana. I conceive community service oriented values as an orientation or disposition to act in directions that are inclined to benefit society as a whole. Simmons and Dei's (2012) anti-colonial theory recommends that education must project cultural worldviews and since traditional African education emphasised the public purpose, it becomes vital to find out how values of community oriented service can be brought in to H.E in Ghana.

Chapter Eight illustrates how African pride can be restored in Ghana's H.E. As indicated in the theoretical framework European imperialism, enslavement and colonialism trumped on the African pride. As a result, the African struggles against these phenomena sought to advocate and promote the African agency. The works of Marcus Garvey, Aime Cesaire, Leopold Sedar Senghor, Fanon, and Nkrumah promoted African cultural identity. Scholars Hoskins (1992),



Clarke (1970), and Asante (1999) highlight the distortion of Africa's history to denigrate Africa and Africans so that Africans would not want to associate with Africa. It is in this light that Simmons and Dei's (2012) anti-colonial theory suggests the need to confront and resist the promotion of European hegemony as the solitary means of generating, validating and disseminating knowledge.

Chapter Nine illustrates alternative means of funding H.E and the future possibilities of H.E in Ghana. It was important to find out alternative means of funding H.E in Ghana given the increasing cost due to neo-liberal policies that seek to push the cost of H.E to students. The conceivable danger associated with the increasing cost is the ability and tendency for a wealthy minority to perpetuate themselves. For the economically disadvantaged, H.E becomes a business relationship. The business outlook threatens the need to achieve community service oriented values and the public purpose in Ghana's H.E. Furthermore, considering the historical genealogy of H.E in Ghana and the criticism it continues to receive, I enquired on the future possibilities of H.E in Ghana.

Section Five presents Other Angles to the Study and incorporates Chapters Ten, Eleven and Twelve. Chapter Ten illustrates the moments of dislocation that ensued due to the colonial schemas that initiated a clash of worldviews where the dominant views were largely European. Owing to the supplanting of the traditional African worldviews in H.E in Ghana, I present how the Ghanaian/African is dislocated in the process of H.E. The moments of dislocation I focus on are historical and linguistic dislocations, "journey to the West", altered conceptualisation of education, inferiorising of the African being, and apathy to knowledge but love of certificates. The other moments of dislocation I touch on are new informal education, unnecessary competition, eroded spirituality, and idiosyncratic education replacing holistic education. I discuss these moments of dislocation in connection to the empirical aspects of the study and recommend that Ghana's universities re-examine these to help make H.E meaningful. Even though I contend that Ghanaians have been hoodwinked by colonialism, I equally recognise the role of the schooled Ghanaians in the plight of their society.

Chapter Eleven elucidates the perspectives of influential African leaders on the nature of H.E that is needed in Africa. The works of Kwame Nkrumah and Julius Nyerere, the first presidents of Ghana and Tanzania respectively are employed because of their advocacy for African universities to alter the colonial focus of H.E in Africa. They wrote broadly arguing

fundamentally that the “ivory tower” mentality of colonial universities in Africa was meaningless and for H.E to be meaningful in Africa, it must connect with society and share in its aspirations.

Chapter Twelve discusses the prevailing colonial mindsets and relationship in Ghana. The chapter dwells significantly on Peter Ekeh’s categorisation of the two publics that emerged out of colonialism; the civic public and the primordial public. Ekeh (1975) argues that the civic public (governmental setup) and the primordial public (ethnic groupings) have an amoral and moral dispositions attached to them. I employ this attitudinal dispositions to explain how they inform socio-economic and political relationships in Ghana. The schooled, with an amoral attitude to the civic public aid in exploiting it even though they make efforts to sustain the primordial public. It becomes important to decolonise the attitudes of the highly schooled towards the civic public to help improve socio-cultural, political and economic relations in Ghana.

Section Six entails the Concluding Chapter, Chapter Thirteen. The Chapter concludes the research by offering a conclusion, and presenting the contributions and implications of the study. Although the implications of the research are varied, they intersect and fundamentally interrogate the notions of Ghanaian H.E, particularly questions that border on what, why and how to construct Ghanaian H.E. to be more meaningful to serve a public purpose.

Section Seven – The Last Word contains Chapter Fourteen. In Chapter Fourteen, I take a last bite of the “kaklo” (Ghanaian delicacy) by utilising African proverbs as a framework and knowledge base to suggest that traditional African notions of H.E centre on the public good. The reason for ending the thesis in this fashion is to give the last word to the African voice and worldview on the primary purpose of H.E.

## **Section One: Purpose and Theoretical Framework of the Study**

### **Chapter Two: Theoretical Framework – Theorizing Anti-colonial Theory**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter presents the theoretical perspective of the study. The study is based broadly on the anti-colonial persuasions of Franz Fanon, Kwame Nkrumah, Aimé Césaire, Leopold Sedar Senghor and Marcus Garvey. Specifically, the study employs the anti-colonial theorisation by Simmons and Dei (2012), which is an embodiment of the works of the aforementioned theorists, as a framework. However, before arriving at the theory, I touch on the events and phenomena that contribute to this theorisation.

I commence this framework by writing on imperialism, colonialism (its political, economic and social dynamics), neo-colonialism and neo-imperialism. The mental disorientation (denial and ignorance of traditional African perspectives), and reorientation (introduction of supposedly “superior” alternative paradigms) I indicate as vital negative consequences of colonialism and colonial H.E. I then direct attention to some early invasions of Africa and the corresponding struggles and forms of resistances to these invasions. I highlight the struggles in Haiti, the Caribbean region and North/South America that initiated resistance movements that resulted in activity in Harlem, the National Associations for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), Negritude, and the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA). Their contributions are discussed along with attention to some African continental struggles. These struggles in the West influenced Kwame Nkrumah (Ghana’s first President) who subsequently led the “Independence Movement” in Africa.

Furthermore, I introduce post-colonial theory and anti-colonial theory, justifying my adoption of Simmons and Dei’s (2012) anti-colonial theory. The primary argument is that the principal characters who promoted and developed post-colonial theorisations (like Fanon, Nkrumah, Aimé Césaire, Leopold Sedar Senghor etc.) fought against imperialism and colonialism. Therefore, I contend that any theorisation against imperialism or colonialism should project some resistance, urgency and agency. Anti-colonial struggles gave rise to post-colonial theorisations; they intersect on the need for decolonisation and the prescriptions by Simmons

and Dei (2012) translate to a form of praxis that will inform forms of action needed in the H.E domain in Ghana.

Operating within the framework of anti-colonial theory automatically presents concepts like Imperialism, Colonialism, Neo-colonialism and Globalisation. Given that these concepts permeate anti-colonial narratives and persuasions, it is appropriate to explain and foreground them. Further, foregrounding these concepts will help the reader understand activities and events that emerged to initiate these resistances, and ultimately how these resistance movements influence and shape anti-colonial persuasions.

## **Imperialism**

Imperialism continues to generate debates in respect to its meaning and conceptualisation. According to Proudman (2008), imperialism “has been a word of protean imprecision, remarkable above all for its polemical power” (p. 395). Over time, imperialism has shifted in meaning to suit specific conditions, situations and circumstances. In the 1870s, imperialism converged in the interconnected “economic, moral, systemic or structural, and cultural” (p. 396) arrangements between Europe and the world. Imperialism in the Victorian era swung between notions of benevolence and conceit, depending on one’s position. However, contemporary connotations of imperialism are negative as “it frequently names neither a policy nor an intention, but a deep and even self-denying historical structure” (p. 397). Hobson (in Smith, 2012) contends that imperialism “was the system of control, which secured the markets and capital investments” (p. 60). MacKenzie (in Smith, 2012) sees imperialism beyond force, materialism and politics to “a complex ideology, which had widespread cultural, intellectual and technical expressions” (p. 62).

Smith (2012) thus sees the scope of imperialism as “economic expansion; subjugation of ‘others’; an idea or spirit with many forms of realization; and imperialism as a discursive field of knowledge” (p. 60). European desire for prosperity facilitated voyages, raids and destruction of indigenous groups across the world. Prominent examples of imperialist expansion include the voyages of Christopher Columbus, Vasco Da Gama, Mungo Park and Vasco Nunez de Balboa among others. Military incursions led to land grabs and in some instances subsequent signings of pacts. The invaders also imposed their cultural paradigms on occupants of those jurisdictions. The demarcation of Africa is an example of the imposition of reconstruction of

indigenous identities and jurisdictions. Although these invasions allowed human rights abuses, they manifested differently and as such, nuanced accounts of imperialism are needed.

According to Smith (2012), during European enlightenment, imperialism was central to the “development of the modern state, of science, of ideas and of the ‘modern’ human person” (p. 62). Europe became the imperial hub and spread its tentacles worldwide. Proudman (2008) indicates the period from 1870 to 1914 as being the high point of European imperialism. This period saw the initiation to partition Africa in 1884–1885. While this partitioning period has become synonymous with the “Scramble for Africa”, Nilsson (2013) holds that the enslavement period commenced the scramble.

### **Cultural Imperialism**

The cultural meaning of imperialism is common in post-colonial theorisation. It focuses on an “attack” on African cultural systems by Eurocentric perspectives (Young, 2001, 2012; Ahluwalia, 2012). According to Proudman (2008), imperialism in the 21<sup>st</sup> century implies military interventions to advance and sustain economic aspirations. Imperialism’s elasticity covers a global influence that includes the spread of languages to fast food chains to any global inequity. This global power may be sincere or insincere, and combative or “diplomatic” but the dominated has to operate on the persecutor’s terms. Although a complex matrix, material aspirations remain foundational to any form of imperialism.

I conceive imperialism as a system of spreading a nation’s authority and influence beyond its jurisdiction by fair or foul means to capture land, raw materials and labour usually for economic advancement. Imperialism is a complex system that promotes and sustains a single narrative to achieve its cause. A past dominant narrative was “civilisation” and was adopted to impose prescribed worldviews on Africans. Presently, “democracy” is the single narrative employed to achieve imperial aspirations of capturing land, resources and labour. The violent invasion of Libya by the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) forces is an example of the continuous use of violence. I contend that imperialism is the superstructure and the governing mindset that employs and gives identity to ideas of colonialism, neo-colonialism and other guises designed to capture land, resources and labour in foreign jurisdictions. The study argues for the awareness of imperialism and its guises in order to confront them. Moreover, the need to interrogate the psychological impact of imperialism on Africans is vital due to the projection of the West as “civilised”. This position grants the coloniser the right to prescribe and validate

ways of being and ideologies. It is in this light that colonial H.E in Ghana, structured to sustain this “agenda”, necessitates examination.

## **Colonialism**

According to Loomba (2015), imperialism and colonialism are used interchangeably. Indeed, there seem to be little disparity between them. As per the discussion on imperialism, I see European colonialism in Africa as a tool of imperialism to advance the imperial goal because European colonialism in Africa also sought to capture foreign land, resources, markets and labour. Colonialism in Africa came with violence although it seemed structured. Smith (2012) consents to the close mutuality and relatedness of imperialism with colonialism – the colonial being a tool of/for imperialism. Colonialism “became imperialism’s outpost, the fort and the port of imperial outreach” (p. 63) and “facilitated this expansion by ensuring that there was European control, which necessarily meant securing and subjugating the indigenous populations” (p. 60–61).

The purpose of colonialism in Africa was to seize Africa’s resources and control the supply and destination of these resources. The need for secure economic returns required colonialism in Africa to be interspersed with political and social dynamics. According to Nilsson (2013), the intensity of the desire for African resources and potential risk of conflict among European countries led to the Berlin Summit in 1884–1885, held under the auspices of the German chancellor Otto von Bismarck. On the agenda were:

- i. Freedom of trade on the Congo River;
  - ii. Implementing the Vienna Convention on freedom of navigation on the Congo and Niger Rivers, and;
  - iii. Determining formalities needed for new claims on African coasts to be deemed effective.
- (p. 12)

The Berlin Conference offered the outline for colonisation of Africa through the three “Cs”—“Commerce, Christianity and Civilisation” (Southall, 2009, p. 5). Nkrumah (1963) maintains European colonialism influenced and altered Africa culturally, economically, socially, politically, spiritually, and aesthetically.

## **Economic Dynamics**

The overarching economic goal of colonialism in Africa was to maximise profit at minimal cost. Colonial economic agendas in Africa succeeded through the establishment of a commodity-based system of trade, which usually specified cash crops that depended on the needs of the colonising state and which were incorporated into an economic system outside the control of Africans.

Nkrumah (1963) captures the views of Albert Sarraut, French Colonial Secretary of State in France in 1923, to reiterate the economic basis of colonialism:

What is the use of painting the truth? At the start colonization was not an act of civilization, nor was it a desire to civilize. It was an act of force motivated by interests. An episode in the vital competition which, from man to man, from group to group, has gone on ever increasing; the people who set out to seize colonies in distant lands were thinking primarily of themselves, and were working for their own profits, and conquering for their own power. (p. 21)

The colonial system extracted resources from African colonies, produced them in the industries in the West and shipped the finished product back into the colonies for consumption. This halted the manufacturing sectors of colonised Africa and to date, through various economic policies, Ghana has become a “dumping ground” for foreign goods. In the colonial era, finished products returned in exchange for raw materials such as palm oil and groundnut. Presently, the resources are taken in exchange for financial aid. Nkrumah (1963) mentions the closure of a soap factory in Ghana to make way for imports from Britain. Furthermore, colonialism compelled African farmers to produce solely for export – creating a monopoly that kept prices low. These mechanisms undermined the economic advancement of farmers and the economic systems of African colonies. Nkrumah (1963) contends that, although there was the option for European colonists to invest in the colonising country, external investment offered greater returns due to “cheap” factors of production similar to the imperial aim of cheap labour, land and raw resources. While colonialists inculcated African traditional leaders into business enterprises that were usually in the areas of mining and timber, missionaries preached to Africans to concentrate on the treasures in heaven.

African colonies had to generate funds for internal development while the colonisers focused solely on extracting resources for export. Transport systems operated from the resource bases to the ports, and the highly commercialised selective agriculture threatened subsistent farming, forcing people to travel to large farms to work for wage labour (Nkrumah, 1963). Colonialism in Africa also changed patterns of work and gender roles. The demands of the cash crop economy forced many women and children into the production system. As Grier (1992) reveals, “these women and children performed the bulk of the labor in farming enterprises that considerably enriched many owners” (p. 321).

The aggregation of these situations has stalled the technical and industrial development of Africa. The extraction of raw materials continue to make Africa a source of raw materials for industrialised societies and the single cash crop system makes Africa grow what it does not eat and eat what it does not grow. Ghana and the Ivory Coast are the leading producers of cocoa yet have no hand in determining cocoa prices.

### **Political Dynamics**

The necessity to gain political control was intricately tied to the economic aspiration of the colonial and imperial agenda. With African traditional leaders controlling trade and resources both locally and internationally, they could demand high prices and determine the nature of engagement in trade. However, seizing political control offered colonialists control of African economies and resources to determine the prices of the resources and initiate policies to have absolute control of the resources and trade.

There were generally two types of colonies in Africa – the non-settler colonies like Ghana, Nigeria, and Togo, and settler colonies like Kenya, Namibia, South Africa, Zimbabwe, and Mozambique. To Nkrumah (1963), geographical circumstances determined the decision whether to settle or not and they also shaped the nature of political policies and forms of administration. Many European countries participated in colonising Africa; France, Britain, Germany, Italy, Portugal, Belgium and Netherlands were particularly dominant forces. Leopold of Belgium owned Congo, “77 times the size of Belgium” (Nkrumah, 1963, p. 12), and attacked Africans who failed to meet expected economic targets. However, France and England had the most colonies in Africa. To Blanton, Mason and Athow (2001), the French approach was for direct rule or assimilation and centralisation of power and authority. Nkrumah



(1963) argues that the French strategy was to assimilate particular Africans into French culture in order to make them “black French”. The Portuguese, like the French, practiced assimilation and forced labour in their colonies in Mozambique and Angola.

Indirect rule employed local governance structures in different African colonies. Some locals were co-opted into colonial structures as facilitators to help govern colonies, albeit with Europeans occupying the upper echelons of organizational hierarchies. The British employed this system to immense success in northern Nigeria and Uganda (Young, 1988). According to Young (1994), the British absorbed smaller marginalized ethnic groups to govern, which in turn created tension-prone African states such as Nigeria, Cameroon, Sudan, Rwanda, and Central African Republic. These methods affected the enhancement of traditional systems of governance, and the co-opted natives were also unaccountable to their societies.

### **Social Dynamics**

Social dynamics, unlike the political and economic mechanisms of control, were far-reaching and less transparent. In Nkrumah (1963) and Fanon (2008)’s view, social dynamics caused the greatest harm, in that the psychological effects of colonialism are harder to eradicate. The basic premise of enslavement and subsequent colonisation became rooted in the trope of the “inferior” African. This racism (described as the view of the superiority of “races”) appeared on signposts that read “No African Allowed or For Europeans Only” (Nkrumah, 1963, p. 12), thus initiating patterned behavioural worldviews against Africans. Nkrumah contends, “Europeans relegated us to the position of inferiors in every aspect of our everyday life. Many of our people came to accept the view that we were an inferior people” (p. 32). Over time, Africans believed they were “fit only to provide cheap labour for foreign employers” and “...not to be able to appreciate, or to need, any real measure of social improvement” (p. 33). It is therefore not surprising when the United Nation Environment Programme (UNEP, 2008) reveals that 77% of Nigerian women admitted to frequently using skin-lightening products. Similarly, 59%, 35%, 27% and 25% of women in Togo, South Africa, Senegal and Mali respectively consented to bleaching. A means to shed their ‘blackness’. While the statistics focus on women, it reflects how African men also seem to judge beauty – it is a much bigger social issue. In the nutshell, “whiteness and acceptance of white values” became a model to apportion human worth and social status. So the closer an individual is to European

worldviews, the higher their human worth and social status. These are in line with European imperial aims of capturing foreign land, raw resources, labour and crucially, the mind.

Social infrastructures from health care to education were not the focus of Europeans, although there was enough to cater for colonists and a few Africans in the colonial bureaucratic setup. The colonists barred Africans from acquiring skills that would offer better wages. Africans and Europeans received dissimilar remuneration for the same tasks, and there were no options for trade unions (Nkrumah, 1963). Lourenço Marques' views express the racist agenda, "The Portuguese think that it was a mistake on the part of God to make the African, African". Accordingly, "their assimilation policy is an effort to correct this divine error" (Nkrumah, 1963, p. 12). Biney (2008), asserts that the "white man's burden" justified European economic exploitation and political domination over Africans" (p. 130).

### **Neo-colonialism and Neo-Imperialism**

Neo-colonialism was coined by the first Ghanaian President, Kwame Nkrumah in the 1960s to describe the puppet regimes (a State that is supposedly independent yet controlled by external forces) in African countries (Loomba, 2015). According to Nkrumah (1963), neo-colonial and neo-imperial ideologies are the most potent threats to Africa. Neo-colonialism appears secretly or openly, through either military incursions or diplomacy but ultimately to maintain systems of economic exploitation. It manifests in powerful Western countries establishing military bases in foreign territories (usually those formerly colonised) to sustain economic advancement. In other instances, powerful countries ensure their favoured candidates and political groups govern those spaces to front the aspiration of the imperial force. Citing France to illustrate the sustained exploitation, Nkrumah says, "Soon after the Second World War, France set up two financial organizations for the purpose of 'aiding economic development' in overseas territories. These were F.I.D.E.S. (*Le Fonds d'Investissement pour le Développement Économique et Social*) and the G.G.O.M. (*La Caisse centrale de la France d'Outre-Mer*)" (p. 175).

In present global relationships where the Euro-American centre dictates the economic, political and military relationships and their unswerving desire to control other parts of the world, new forms of neo-imperialism and neo-colonialism have emerged. These relationships are in the interest of the nations who initiate or impose them. For instance, the United States African

Command (Africomm), under the auspices of the USA military, pursues an agenda of American expansionism inside Africa. The role of International Monetary Fund and World Bank in Africa further gives credence to Nkrumah's conception that economic institutions and multinationals are neo-colonial guises that sustain the colonial relationship with Africa. Ghana is currently under an IMF programme so the economy of the country is controlled and supervised by the IMF.

### **Neo-liberalism**

Neo-colonialism, which is the guise under which the colonial agenda operates, is dynamic, changes with time and appears under different manifestations. As Nkrumah (1963) indicates, financial organisations are the main vehicles for neo-colonialism. The activities of Bretton Woods (especially the World Bank and IMF) over the past three decades in Africa attest to Nkrumah's assertion. Neoliberalism, which has been pushed over this period, is an economic policy and school of thought that advocates free market, freedom of the individual and pushes governments to hand over its welfare responsibilities to private banks and corporations. Marginson (1997) captures it as "...the reconstruction of the social order as a market competition, grounded in competitive individualism" (p. 54). The excessive privatisation witnessed in Ghana and experienced through the 1980s and 1990 under the IMF and World Bank are examples of the neoliberal agenda. This includes conditionalities for loans and the present debate about privatisation of the Electricity Company of Ghana due to some funds received from United States of America's Millennium Challenge Corporation is a further example. The neoliberal schema gravitates towards wealthy, professional classes and individual competitiveness, and away from ordinary people and a sense of community. The excessive individualism advocated by neoliberalism is anti-Ghanaian and African culture, which both practice and share a communal outlook to life. The neoliberal agenda reflects the economic focus of the imperial and colonial agenda to capture markets, labour, land and resources.

### **Globalisation**

Another important phenomenon that is closely associated with the neoliberal agenda is globalisation. Although widely used, its conceptualisation remains quite vague. Nevertheless, a few Euro-American-centred definitions insist on the "economic or trade" factor. Storper

(1992) offers a short definition—“it is a process in which trade grows more rapidly than production” (p. 66). According to Gunter and van der Hoeven (2004), globalisation is the “gradual integration of economies and societies driven by new technologies, new economic relationships and the national and international policies of a wide range of actors, including governments, international organisations, business, labour and civil society” (p. v). Similarly, Carr and Che, as cited in Draxler (2006), see globalisation as: “a reorganisation of production into global production systems, notably global value chains and export processing zones” (p. 7). Stiglitz (2002) asserts it is:

A closer integration of the countries and peoples of the world, which has been brought about by the enormous reductions of costs of transportation and communication, and the breaking down of artificial barriers to the flows of goods, services, capital, knowledge, and (to a lesser extent) of people across borders. (p. 9)

However, scholars with an African disposition hold views radically different from the earlier Euro-American trade inclined definitions. For instance, Ake (1993) says globalisation is the assembling of capital all over the world in search of profits. It is a scheme based on the interest and influence of Multinational Corporations (MNCs). Abdul-Raheem (1998) conceives of globalisation as recolonisation of Africa. He writes: “What Africa is going through now is a recolonization, not by individual European countries anymore but under the aegis of the IMF/World Bank and the supportive and collaborative service of Western bilateral/multilateral aid increasingly run and channelled through Western NGOs” (p. 24). Campbell and Worrell (2006) note, “If anything, in the era of globalization the exploitation of the masses of the people has intensified. This exploitation is being carried out under the neoliberal ideas of liberalization that redistributes wealth from the exploited to the powerful” (p. 36)

The negative effect of neo-colonial tendencies and a neoliberal market approach to Africa leads Holt-Giménez and Patel, as cited in Biney (2012), to argue that:

At the time of decolonization in the 1960s, Africa was not just self-sufficient in food; it was actually a net exporter with exports averaging 1.3 million tons a year between 1966 and 1970. Today, the continent imports 25% of its food, with almost every country being a net food importer. As a consequence, hunger and famine have been recurrent

phenomena, with the last three years alone seeing food emergencies break out in the Horn of Africa, the Sahel, Southern Africa, and Central Africa. (p. 131)

The views captured on globalisation resonate with current global realities. In spite of advancement in Information Communication Technology (ICT) and the opportunities it offers, there is the need for scrutiny to highlight the deeper and usually unseen dynamics of globalisation. Given that the highly schooled in Ghana are most prone to be immersed in the scheme of globalisation, it is important to offer critical insights for a prudent relationship in global relations.

### **Mental Disorientation**

Turning our attention back to the insidious social consequences of colonialism on the African mind, Fanon (2004) provides a psychoanalytical path to liberation. First, Fanon identifies twin perils of post-independence politics: the marginalisation, devastation and general injustice of the masses by the highly schooled; and the inter-ethnic and interfaith hostilities. Fanon advocates that these hostilities should not lead to economic conflicts and the destabilisation of nations.

Fanon (2004) insists the French used the discipline of psychology to advance colonialism and endorse racism. Fanon's knowledge in psychiatry granted him the expertise to evaluate racism as cloaked in scientific language, and how pseudo-scientific racist justifications were employed in defending colonialism as guarding natives from their worse nature. The false scientific venture was not exclusive to psychology; it was common in many academic fields with anthropology and archaeology providing scholarly basis and justification for European aggression.

In examining nationalism, imperialism and the colonial inheritance, Fanon (2004) provides a nuanced description of the interplay between the coloniser, the colonised intellectual and the colonised masses. Fanon breaks down the colonial network and structures, its violent nature and its inclination to consume the schooled African. Fanon maintains, "Colonialism is not a machine capable of thinking, a body endowed with reason. It is naked violence and only gives in when confronted with greater violence" (2004, p. 23). In Fanon's (2004) view, colonialism is a contagious and hostile attack on humanity, and he thus offers ideas on political organisation

and social restructuring for revolutionaries as well as political and social activists. The works of Fanon continue to influence civil rights, anti-colonialism, and black consciousness movements globally.

To Fanon (2004), the colonial agenda is to shut the mind of the African from anything indigenous. Colonialism is to wipe out any image of Self in African consciousness through misrepresentation of the African, their history and achievements. To Europeans, to colonise is a “divine” duty. Fanon is very critical of the highly schooled African, probably not all, but those he frequently refers to as “colonised intellectuals” – the mentally enslaved. He argues they perceive their enslavement as enlightenment, subsequently transferring their beliefs and values to society. The schooling process was a ploy to create local accomplices in the colonial business. The highly schooled negotiate for European or “White” validation through constant mimicry to preserve the colonial structures and to resist African culture.

On the interplay between the colonialist, the highly schooled and the masses, the highly schooled actively pursued the position of the coloniser making them self-centred and easy to manipulate. On the other hand, the masses wanted the colonialists overthrown. Due to the interests of the highly schooled Fanon (2004) says, “The nationalist political parties never insist on the need for confrontation precisely because their aim is not the radical overthrow of the system” (p. 22). Rather, the highly schooled preferred to be subservient and did not want radical confrontations.

On decolonisation, Fanon (2004) argues, “colonization or decolonization: it is simply a power struggle. The exploited realize that their liberation implies using every means available, and force is the first” (p. 23). Fanon nevertheless admits that decolonisation is a multifaceted phenomenon that requires careful planning to ensure lasting success. Fanon (2004) remains wary of the “colonised intellectual” and the challenges they pose towards effective decolonisation due to their acceptance of the colonial structures. They appear to have escaped their Africanness and are willing to facilitate the exploitation of societal resources. This attitude, Fanon contends, would lead to the masses revolting.

Fanon (2004) entreats independent countries to avoid the lure to imitate or follow Europe and the United States. He cautions against multinational organisations, for instance the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank, as their agenda is to exploit vulnerable countries, many of whom are located in the “third world”. The relationship with these

multinational institutions benefits the institutions at the expense of the “developing countries”. Moreover, given that the survival of these multinational institutions lies in sustained impoverishment of the “third world”, tremendous efforts are made to repress this reality. He continues:

The truth is we must not accept such conditions. We must refuse outright the situation to which the West wants to condemn us. Colonialism and imperialism have not settled their debt to us once they have withdrawn their flag and their police force from our territories. For centuries the capitalists have behaved like real war criminals in the underdeveloped world. Deportation, massacres, forced labor, and slavery were the primary methods used by capitalism to increase its gold and diamond reserves, and establish its wealth and power. (p. 52)

### **Earliest Invasions of Africa, African Revolts Against Imperialism, Colonialism and Liberation Movements that Contributed Towards Anti-colonial Persuasions**

Among the earliest invasions of Africa was the Persian invasion of Kemit (Egypt) in 525 B.C.E. Macedonians (under Alexander) and the Romans led by Julius Caesar assaulted Kemit in 333 B.C and 50 B.C. respectively. While Arabs and Turks raided in the 7<sup>th</sup> century and 16<sup>th</sup> century respectively, the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> century was for the French under Napoleon and the English (Diop, 1974). Advanced technology, coupled with sophisticated weaponry that accompanied the European foray, made Europe “sufficiently equipped by the 15<sup>th</sup> century to plunge into the discovery and conquest of the world” (Diop, 1974, p. 10).

Patterson (1970) asserts that the periods between 1655 and 1740 brewed lots of rebellion against English imperialism in the Caribbean. Scott (2007) mentions the Berbice revolts in the mid-1700s in Guyana. In the late 16<sup>th</sup> century, Haiti embarked on arguably the most prominent anti-colonial and anti-enslavement resistance in human history. Enslaved Africans in Haiti fought and overpowered three European imperialist forces (Britain, France, and Spain) to become the only country to have achieved such a feat. In 1804, Haiti became the first African society worldwide, and the first Latin American and Caribbean country to gain independence under the leadership of Toussaint Louverture. Louverture, a former enslaved African, led the struggle initiated in 1791 and upon his death in a French prison, Jean-Jacques Dessalines took over the mantle and declared Haiti’s independence (Deagan, 2004; Coupeau, 2008; Danticat,

2005). Girard (2009) identifies Dedee Bazilee, Sanitte Belair and Cecile Fatiman as women who played important roles in the revolution.

Elsewhere in the Americas, the Nat Turner rebellion is an example of the many revolts and forms of resistance embarked upon by enslaved Africans in the USA (Scott, 2004) for freedom. The abolition of slavery did not automatically confer immediate freedom and humanity to Africans. Further struggles ensued to acquire more rights. The National Associations for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), formed in 1909, was to advance the cause of Black and “coloured people”. It aimed to eradicate forced segregation and the implementation of the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> Amendments that pursued equal rights in education for “Blacks” and “Whites” and the suffrage of “Black men”. There were countrywide demonstrations against D. W. Griffiths’ film, *Birth of a Nation*, which deified White supremacy and the Ku Klux Klan, and other campaigns against lynching and lawless behaviours towards African Americans and “people of colour”. The activities of the NAACP contributed to a decrease in the lynching of African Americans (NAACP, n.d).

The emergence of Marcus Garvey and the formation of his group, the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) in 1914, and the subsequent transfer of UNIA to USA in 1916, was vital in the African struggles. In response to the ethnic bias embedded in European expansionism, Garvey, a Jamaican-born activist, pushed for Africans worldwide to find pride in their blackness. Garvey’s call was for Africans to look to Africa for their consciousness and not judge themselves within the periscope of Europeans because that would be fruitless. The UNIA expanded greatly in USA, becoming the largest mass movement in African American history (Vincent, 1977). The influence spread throughout Africa and the world and there were over 800 branches established worldwide (Vincent, 1977), and present in 38 states in the USA (Martin, 1976). Garvey’s ideology blended religious, political and economic factors geared towards the upliftment of “Black people”. The call was for the “Black Nationalism” – an idea wherein Africans would define themselves, be self-determining, and defy attempts by non-Africans to define and determine them. To Vincent (1977), Garvey is generally the first person to push the African to find pride in their Africanness or “Blackness” after the negative European imageries. Marcus Garvey’s UNIA had as its slogan: “Africa for Africans, those home and abroad”.



These events led to the first two Pan Africa congresses in Paris in 1919 and subsequently in London in 1921. They focused on racial equality, and it is worth adding that continental Africans did not attend the initial four congresses.

The activities of these movements culminated in the cultural renaissance of African Americans in Harlem, New York, in the 1920s, which spread throughout the USA. This development drew the attention of publishers and critics to African American culture and the impact of this reawakening was international. This renaissance created a path for the works of African American literature, music, art and politics into mainstream American culture (Baker Jr, 2013).

The Negritude Movement emerged in 1930–1940 to confront and resist European physical and psychological warfare grounded on “race”. The principal originators comprised of Aimé Césaire and Leopold Sedar Senghor, with the former credited for framing the term “Negritude” (Senghor, 1974). This literary and ideological philosophy emerged in the 1930s and aimed at emboldening a shared and collective ethnic identity for Africans globally. Touching on the cosmology of the literary campaign by the Negritude Movement and commenting on the essence of the African being, Senghor (1974) asserts that in Africa:

The first among these values, which is of philosophic nature, is that for all black people, the soul is incarnated within the body and more generally the spirit within the matter. In other words, the matter and the spirit are in a dialectical relationship, bearing in mind that it was the spirit which first informed the matter. (p. 270)

Politically, Senghor (1974) highlights the African “pattern of community mindedness... the society was made-up of concentric [sic] communities scaled up one over the other, from the family cell to the kingdom and in which various socio-professional groups were linked up with each other by a system of reciprocal integration” (p. 270). In the field of arts, “the values of negritude can be essentially summed up in the rhythm and the symbolic image. I generally define the negro-African work of art-poem or narration, painting or sculpture, music or dance – as an image or a set of rhythmical images” (p. 270).

## **African Continental Struggles**

While the struggles in the West influenced the independence in Africa, Africans did not sit around waiting for the trickle-down effect. Nukunya (2003) states that the anti-colonial struggle in Ghana/Africa started immediately after the missionaries landed on the continent in the 14<sup>th</sup> century. The Ashanti of present day Ghana engaged in several wars against European invasion from 1805, ending with the war in 1901. Yaa Asantewaa led the last revolt in the Ashanti Empire against British colonialism. Elsewhere, Falola and Oyebade (2010) mention Nzinga Mbande, a 17<sup>th</sup> century Queen in what is now present day Angola, who fought a Portuguese assault. There were Zulu wars against European expansionism in South Africa. Madley (2005) says the Herero war in South West Africa (now Namibia) started in 1902 with the Germans' killing 40,000–70,000 of an estimated population of 90,000 people. However, this holocaust did not deter the African resistances. Clarke (1974) asserts that, "In these wars the people let it be known that they would never live peacefully under foreign domination" (p. 9).

These struggles gained prominence in the 1930s and reached their peak in the late 1950s through to the 1960s (Crowder, 1984; Appiah, 1992; Ahluwalia, 2012; Young, 2001). Appiah (1992) therefore asserts that it was the successes of the early freedom fighters allied with the works and acts of Fanon, Aimé Césaire and Senghor that led to a nationalist movement across Africa.

## **Gold Coast/Ghana**

In the Gold Coast (now Ghana), there were protests against British colonialism. The highly schooled classes used their professions as lawyers, journalists and teachers to speak against colonialism. Joseph Casely Hayford, a journalist from Cape Coast illustrated his thoughts in the book *Ethiopia Unbound*, published in 1911, which advocated for emancipation through African-centred education. Later, the formation of the United Gold Coast Convention (UGCC) gave political impetus to the call for independence, becoming a mass movement in the late 1940s.

World War II and its aftermath contributed to the cause as groups and organisations began to express discontent with colonial rule. For instance, ex-service men returning from the war were unhappy due to failure to gain a pension, gratuities, and promised jobs. Farmers that lost farms

to insects due to lack of insecticides began to agitate. Furthermore, the general recession after the war affected the Gold Coast, heightening tensions. African soldiers participating closely with their European counterparts saw the weaknesses of European soldiers. This challenged the myth associated with the colonial superiority of “Whiteness”. On February 28, 1948, three ex-soldiers (Sergeant Adjetey, Corporal Atippoe, and Private Lamptey) were shot and killed while demonstrating against their plight, further intensifying the growing unrest.

### **Nkrumah’s Return to Gold Coast (Ghana)**

Kwame Nkrumah, Ghana’s first President (1957–1966), devoted efforts towards the liberation of Africans. While studying at Lincoln University in the United States, Nkrumah gained insights through his association and exposure with resistance movements of African Americans (Clarke, 1974). Nkrumah’s experiences formed his convictions and underpinned his ambitions for self-determination for not only the Gold Coast (Ghana) but also the totality of Africa. Accordingly, Clarke (1974) states, “The influence of the ten years that he spent in the United States would have a lingering effect on the rest of his life” (p. 9).

After studying in the USA, Nkrumah lived in London between 1945–1947 where he met other leaders in the African struggle like Senghor, Du-Bois and George Padmore. He had the opportunity to attend the fifth Pan African congress in Manchester (1945) and co-chaired the congress with W.E.B Du Bois and George Padmore, enhancing his skills in political organisation in the process during his stay (Sherwood, 1996). Africans from the continent and Caribbean participated in this conference and the final resolution declared a fight to establish independent states. This Pan-African movement came about because of the unfair and unequal relationship Africa/ns were receiving across the world. Pan-Africanism is an ideology that seeks to unite African people worldwide in the struggle for liberation.

Nkrumah returned to the Gold Coast (Ghana) in 1947 on the invitation of the United Gold Coast Convention (UGCC) led by Dr. J.B Danquah, to take up the position of Secretary. Nkrumah, after a while, diverged ideologically with the UGCC making it difficult to agree and commit to a specific schedule in the struggle for independence. The main contrasting views at play were Nkrumah’s “Self-Government Now” that clashed with the “independence at a future date” advocated by a section of UGCC (Nkrumah, 1963 p.17). Nkrumah was also suspicious of the leadership of the UGCC because of their privileged status and was convinced that the

UGCC was aligning itself with Europe. Nkrumah therefore liaised and networked with the masses, farmers associations, trade unions, youth groups and women to energise the agenda toward independence. The confluence of support, as well as pressure from the various associations drove Nkrumah to form the Convention People's Party (CPP) in 1949. The CPP campaigned for positive action (non-violence and civil disobedience against colonial authorities). This led to Nkrumah's imprisonment on a charge of inciting illegal strikes and demonstrations. The CPP nevertheless continued to function and lead the struggle. Since the colonial legislation did not prevent Nkrumah from contesting in the first general election in Gold Coast in 1951, he contested from prison. The CPP won a landslide victory (34 out of 38 seats) and was allowed to form the first government together with colonial officials. The events in the Gold Coast created a heightened awareness across the continent and the African world. On 6<sup>th</sup> March 1957, Kwame Nkrumah became the first Prime Minister of independent Ghana. Ghana was thus the first "black African" country to gain independence, becoming a Republic on 1<sup>st</sup> July 1960.

### **Nkrumah and African Liberation Struggles**

Nkrumah said on Independence Day that Ghana's independence is meaningless unless it is linked with the total liberation of Africa. Nkrumah therefore contributed immensely towards the struggle for independence of other African states (Clarke, 1974). Nkrumah gave practical expression to this statement by organising the "All African People's Conference" in 1958, bringing together all the Liberation Movements in Africa to formulate ways to overthrow colonialism. He gave logistical and practical support to this course by providing assistance to Patrice Lumumba of Congo, Amilka Cabral of Guinea Bissau and Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia and many others (Biney, 2008). Biney (2008) reveals that "when Guinea under President Sekou Toure said 'No!' to General De Gaulle's notion of independence under a French community, Ghana under Nkrumah loaned Guinea ten million pounds sterling after the French pulled out in haste with the intentions of punishing Toure's impudent stance" (p. 135).

Nkrumah helped form the Organisation of African Union (OAU), now the African Union (A.U), initiated the call, and advanced for a United Africa in the 1960s. Biney concisely captures Nkrumah by saying, "From his student days at Lincoln University in America to his death, Nkrumah was totally committed to the liberation of Africa. He was inspired by the ideals of: freedom, equality, independence, and social justice" (p. 135). Therefore, by 1961, eighteen

African countries had fought for the right to govern themselves. Nkrumah was overthrown by the machinations of the United States Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) (BBC, 2016).

### **Nkrumah on Anti-colonialism**

For Africans, Kwame Nkrumah remains a colossal figure in anti-colonialism. Mazuri says he is among Africa's greatest sons (Mazuri cited in Mensah, 2007). The British Broadcasting Corporation's African listeners judged him "Man of the Millennium" (BBC World Service, 2000). Nkrumah (1997b) maintains that decolonisation would be a product of African-centred H.E. For Nkrumah (1973c), it is vital to reclaim Africa's past and interrogate the factors that contributed to Africa's seizure because until that enterprise could be undertaken, Africa will remain in subjugation. The negative literature on Africa should not demoralise, but instead inspire Africans to tell the African story. Africa in Western scholarship was pseudo-scientific, aimed at justifying the enslavement of Africans, human and material exploitation, and utilising colonialism "as a duty of civilization" (p. 208). It was important to distort Africa's history hence "Hegel's authority was lent to this a-historical hypothesis concerning Africa. And apologists of colonialism and imperialism lost little time in seizing upon it and writing wildly about it to their heart's content" (p. 209). Chapter Eight offers further discussion on Nkrumah's views about H.E in Ghana and Africa.

### **The Birth of Anti-colonial Theoretical Persuasions**

The historical accounts of African struggles and others elsewhere led to anti-colonial theorisations from 1945. These revolutions (ideologically and physically) laid the foundations for many theoretical persuasions, prominent amongst them being the foundational writings related to postcolonial theory. The movements mentioned above have offered collective aspirations to scrutinize the ways oppression has shaped the realities of the oppressed, revealing the guises in which they continue to appear while suggesting the means to confront them. The anti-colonial movements indict global racism, colonialism, imperialism, and touch on intersectional issues of class and gender.

The themes of anti-colonial expositions continue to manifest diversely and are sustained by different actors through scholarship and political movements. The complexity and dynamism of the colonial requires constant interrogation to articulate effective strategies to confront it.

To Young (2001), Frantz Fanon is generally associated with theorizing anti-colonialism due to his role in the Algerian revolt. Dei (2006) and Ahluwalia (2012) share a similar view and acknowledge personalities like Frantz Fanon, Kwame Nkrumah, Mohandas Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, Mao Tse-Tung, Albert Memmi, Aimé Césaire, Che Guevara, Rosa Parks, and Angela Davis. Others include Audre Lorde, Clara Fraser, Claudia Jones, Leopold Senghor, Marcus Garvey, George Padmore, Amílcar Cabral, and W. E. B. Du Bois and many others as those around whom the anti-colonial theory orbit. Dei (2006) adds that anti-colonialism traverses history through a multitude of bodies that have championed the course of the subjugated.

### **Postcolonial Theory**

Postcolonial theorisation and scholarship emerged after the independence struggles in Africa, Asia, and South and Latin America in the 1940s through to the 60s. Post-colonialism generally denotes the resistance against European colonialism and its vestiges post-“World War II”. Post-colonialism also refers to a post-independence era of former European colonies across the world. To Smith (2012) the conversations on imperialism have evolved into “‘post-colonial discourse’, the ‘empire writes back’ and/or ‘writing from the margins’” (p. 63). Proudman (2008) holds that the cultural import of imperialism shapes postcolonial narratives because of its concentration “with language and with cultural systems as both causes and consequences of imperialism” (p. 398).

The notion that the “post” in post-colonialism usually denotes “after colonialism” generates debates. Bobbi Sykes (Aboriginal activist) in Smith (2012) for instance inquires “...Have they left?” (p. 63). Similarly, Shohat (1992) also asks “when exactly, then, does the ‘postcolonial’ begin?” (p. 103). These contentions lead Childs and Williams (1997) to argue that the notion of post-colonialism is not definite enough due to dissimilar tracks of colonialism. However, Loomba in Ahluwalia (2012) suggest that “it is more helpful to think of post-colonialism not just as coming literally after colonialism and signalling its demise, but more flexibly as the contestation of colonial domination and the legacies of colonialism” (p. 12).

Postcolonial theory focuses on colonial heritage and its relics and how these continue to shape colonised people and societies socially, politically, economically, morally and psychologically. It is all-embracing and diverse due to its fluidity and multidisciplinary character (Ahluwalia, 2012; Ashcroft, Griffiths & Tiffin, 2006; Loomba, 2015). Browne, Smye and Varcoe (2005)

note that the diversity of post-colonialism makes it difficult to apply as a unified concept. Ahluwalia (2012) thus recommends contextualisation of postcolonial analysis due to the extensiveness and nuanced tracks of colonialism. Young (2001) concurs with the multidisciplinary character of postcolonial theory and says it taps into perspectives like postmodernism, Marxism, and psychoanalysis. However, McConaghy (2000) and Ahluwalia (2012) maintain the theory is unique despite drawing from poststructuralism and postmodernism. For instance, Ahluwalia (2012) argues that unlike the other “posts”, it is only the postcolonial that grants subjectivity to the colonised. To Anderson (2004a,) a feature of post-colonialism that is distinct from other critical theories is it provides “a vocabulary that will disrupt the history of race-thinking and the structural inequities that have been brought about by histories of colonization and by ongoing neo-colonial practices” (p. 239).

Postcolonial theories usually converge on the negative socio-cultural and psychological effects on the colonised, self-determination, hybridized cultures and reflecting and re-examining the colonial trajectory into present day realities. Others are to identify colonial vestiges, attempts to “normalise” asymmetrical power relations, offering a voice to the subjugated, and how the past and present interact to give meaning to race relations, culture and marginalisation (Gandhi, 1998; McConaghy, 2000; Ahluwalia, 2012). On the scope of the colonised, Said (1989) avows that the colonised has extended to “women, subjugated and oppressed classes, national minorities, and even marginalized or incorporated academic subspecialties” (p. 207).

In Young’s (2012) purview, postcolonial theory centres on the rights to self-determination and re-creation of Eurocentric notions of “non-white” people. It employs the past to guide its elucidation on how militancy, prejudice, discrimination and exploitation continue to shape societies and the world. Accordingly, postcolonial theory, though an extensive political endeavour, “has never involved a singular theoretical formation, but rather an interrelated set of critical and counterintuitive perspectives, a complex network of paronymous concepts and heterogeneous practices that have been developed out of traditions of resistance to a global historical trajectory of imperialism and colonialism” (p. 20). As a result, the theory constantly adjusts its ideas without essentially generating alternate prototypes. Gilroy (2004) therefore asserts that the theory is concerned with the vestiges and inheritances of colonialism.

To Young (2012), the theory has adopted and redefined Spivak and Gramsci’s thought of subaltern classes. These groups are the voiceless, unknown, overlooked, unseen, concealed and

vulnerable classes in society. The focus on the subaltern “can be interpreted more generally to suggest the extent to which the postcolonial has always been concerned with a politics of invisibility: it makes the invisible visible” (p. 23). Young (2012) asserts that the original desire of post-colonialism was to illuminate to the world these barely recognised spaces and the intricacies of their existence. It was important because of the fragmented accounts of world histories, which were predominantly tales on Europe and Eurocentric configurations. The agenda of people in authority was to overlook this class to perpetuate their exploitation. Accordingly, the liberating voice of the postcolonial escaped the subaltern. In any case, the voice became inconsistent with its aims due to post-independence conflicts resulting in colonial structures. The mission of postcolonial theory therefore “is to make the invisible, in this sense, visible so that its injustices can be redressed” (p. 23).

The contemporary dynamic of the subaltern classes transcends specific geographies to inter-continental migration patterns where they go to seek greener pastures. The exposition on the subaltern and the dynamics therein further touch on other concepts such as subjectivity, identity, representation, and nationalism. Due to the vastness of the theory, various fields situate themselves in areas relevant to the object of their studies and disciplinary boundaries (Young, 2012).

### **Tensions, Intentions, and Contradictions**

In the view of Gilmartin and Berg (2007), “Anglo-American geography generally, and ‘British’ geography specifically” rarely locate postcolonial theory in anti-colonial struggles. Instead, “Edward Said, Homi Bhabha and Gayatri Spivak” get the attention (p. 120). Nkomo (2011) and Ahluwalia (2012) concur with Gilmartin and Berg, articulating a view that is concerned with the appropriateness of the theory to Africa as it does not locate the specificities of African challenges. Ahluwalia (2012) posits that postcolonial theory disregards Africa. Smith (2012) shares similar sentiments concerning indigenous societies – it denies them the skill to create meaningful realities. This leads Radhakrishnan (1993) to question the privileging of postcolonial theory in Western scholarship, arguing it is quite meaningless to colonised societies. In this respect, Shohat (1992) contends that “the diplomatic gesture of relinquishing the terrorizing terms ‘imperialism’ and ‘neo-colonialism’ in favor of the pastoral ‘post-colonial’ guaranteed approval” (p. 99). Postcolonial does not provoke notions of subjugation, oppression and manipulation. Ahluwalia (2012) insists postcolonial notions fail to confront



social and political issues required for worthy results. For Africans, he maintains that the scholarships of African-centred movements (Negritude movements) remain important to postcolonial studies. Smith (2012) argues there is radical literature that should form the basis of such discourse, for instance Franz Fanon. In all, Young (2012) writes that these contentions demonstrate “the degree to which there has never been a unitary postcolonial theory” (p. 10). Ahluwalia (2012) says postcolonial scholarship is criticised as “essentially a discourse of Third World intellectuals who operate from within their privileged position in the First World” (p. 2).

Despite the criticisms of postcolonial theory, I do not think that it is as unpleasant, irrelevant or dead as Bayart (2010) and others would want to portray it. In fact, such thoughts cause Young (2012) to argue that:

The desired dissolution of postcolonial theory does not mean that poverty, inequality, exploitation, and oppression in the world have come to an end, only that some people in the U.S. and French academies have decided they do not want to have to think about such things any longer and do not want to be reminded of those distant invisible contexts which continue to prompt the transformative energies of the postcolonial. (p. 19–20)

Postcolonial theory’s attempt to recount the colonial past and present, without a doubt, will always be a relevant cause among colonised people. The need to campaign for redress will also continue to gain relevance and prominence among these groups.

### **Anti-Colonial Theory**

Anti-colonialism as a theory (within an African perspective) emerged out of the resistance against European and ‘white Arabian’ expansionism and oppression, gaining prominence post-1945. It can be defined as a framework that seeks to conscientise Africans of the continuous manifestation of European and Arabian expansionism and the need to devise strategies to confront them, and to assert the African agency and urgency.

This study employs the anti-colonial theorisation by Simmons and Dei (2012) to help mitigate the sustenance of colonial and re-colonising social relationships in Ghana through H.E. Simply, ways to arrest the conscious or unconscious nurturing of colonial values that sustain the colonial legacy. The theorisation by Simmons and Dei (2012) can also be conceived as

framework that seeks to illustrate how Eurocentric education dislocates the African and African worldview. The theory when applied, encourages the colonised to recognise their dislocations, confront these dislocations, generate, validate and disseminate knowledge and skills within their cultural worldviews. It offers agency and urgency to the colonised in the field of education and seeks to encourage the colonised to embrace themselves and their culture.

Simmons and Dei's (2012) anti-colonial theory captures the principal tenets that have shaped many African struggles from Haiti to Ghana as aforementioned. It has a solid foundation in the past and drives for a decolonised future. The theory presents a paradigm to confront an unconstructive outlook, and reclaim and restore a dismantled and distorted past. Through the provision of essential principles that equip people to discern the colonial, the theory offers a conduit to drive African agency to achieve social change.

Dei (2006) defines anti-colonialism "as an approach to theorizing colonial and re-colonial relations and the implications of imperial structures on the processes of knowledge production and validation, the understanding of indigeneity, and the pursuit of agency, resistance and subjective politics" (p. 2). According to Simmons and Dei (2012), adopting the postcolonial or anti-colonial perspectives are political and intellectual stances. The anti-colonial however, survives as a project for all oppressed voices subjected to several interpretations. The accounts of colonial oppression shape the anti-colonial and the politics of the anti-colonial lay emphasis on indigenous realities. It is concerned with engaging the present day through the recall of the cruelty of colonialism. They continue:

It is about the continued struggle to resist the neo-colonial governing procedures that reside within the everyday lived experience. The anti-colonial concerns a particular self-reflexive relationship with the past, it calls for the present to dialogue with the past, that the present cannot be interpreted ahistorically through the present. (p. 95)

Simmons and Dei (2012) reaffirm the economic basis of colonialism and its vestiges that exploit material and human resources. Simmons and Dei (2012) state that, while scholarly works on postcolonial and neo-colonial theoretical perspectives inspire anti-colonialism, they are not synonymous. Nevertheless, they share similar themes. Race, class, sexuality, gender, poverty, inequality, exploitation, injustice, reconstruction of ethical norms, violence, domination, and oppression are fundamental to anti-colonial theory.

## **The Twelve Tenets of Anti-Colonial Theory and How They Shape the Study**

Simmons and Dei (2012, p. 73–77) offer twelve principles central to anti-colonial theory. These principles inform important facets of the colonial discourse. The cause of the movements mentioned earlier appears in the themes. They are as follows:

1. Anti-colonial theory is about the workings of imperial, colonial and re-colonial relations, and the repercussions of such associations on:

- Knowledge production, examination and validation;
- The understanding of indiginity and local indigenesness; and
- The quest for agency, resistance and subjective politics.

2. The anti-colonial theory conceives all knowledge consciously designed to confront colonial domination. Given that the accounts of enslavement and colonialism in Africa were based on unworthy scholarship and constructs of the African, this study is shaped to attempt to offer agency, and to empower the African.

3. “Colonial” is conceived as not simply “foreign or alien”, but as “imposed and dominating” (Simmons and Dei, 2012), and “reinforces exclusive notions of belonging, difference and superiority” (Principe cited in Dei, 2006, p.3). This study employs this conceptualisation as a framework for the colonial and colonialism.

4. Re-examining the constitution of the “colonial” grants a deeper understanding and extended appreciation of colonial relations. Anti-colonial theory argues political independence did not arrest the dynamics of colonialism and its social consequences. It is thus important to disentangle the predominant worldview of territorial imperialism and the interplay of power at the state level and refocus on other means such as technologies, education, knowledge and ideologies. In H.E, the diverse means of knowledge production and validation, as well as the selective nature of counting as valid/invalid experiences of students can be viewed as a method of the colonial. Within the academe in Ghana, some senior academics hesitate to accept the views of juniors because it is an affront to their “superiority”. It is my contention that the premium accorded academic titles in Ghana, structures of privilege and the lopsided power

structures of the highly schooled tends to normalise and institutionalise colonial relations. For instance, H.E in Ghana has largely become the means to validate a person's rationality.

5. Anti-colonial praxis theorizes the character and scope of social domination by laying emphasis on the compounded notions of power and the ways it operates to create slave–master associations. The idea of “coloniality of power”, as Simmons and Dei (2012) suggest, is extremely lopsided power usually outside the scope and action of the subordinated. As illustrative of this point, within the academic space in Ghana there is the unwritten rule where “certain toes” are not touched, and ignorance of such relationships usually would lead to a lack of promotion or loss of occupation. For students it may result in dismissal. This extinguishes the desire to question the status quo due to an associated victimisation. I illustrate this power relation in its simplest form. As part of a group of invigilators at a university, I witnessed Senior Members (SM) (Assistant Lecturers, Lecturers, Senior Lecturers) being offered bottled water while non-senior members (Teaching Assistants, national service persons and others) had water in plastic sachets. It was surprising to see disparity in the type of water served. The bigger picture that possibly escape the university is how these relations organically transfer into society. Interestingly, the academe expresses “shockprise” (shock and surprise) when politicians perceive themselves as above other citizens. At that point, the academe forgets that politicians were highly schooled in such environments, and their aspirations were formed in the milieu.

6. Functioning within the framework of anti-colonial theory automatically present concepts such as colonialism, oppression, the colonial encounter, decolonization, power, agency and resistance, as discussed earlier. Such a framework articulates the legitimacy of the indigenous voice and intellectual activity of indigenous people. Within this study, indigenous perspectives are presented in African ancestral voices through proverbs in Chapter Fourteen.

7. A critical analysis of colonialism, imperialism and decolonisation offers a profound conception of anti-colonialism. Contesting colonialism, imperialism and decolonisation illustrates the multiple ways the colonial appears and operates. The need for appropriate contextualisation of colonialism is paramount.

8. The theory also appreciates the inner position of spirituality and spiritual knowing. Simmons and Dei (2012) do not emphasise the supernatural but the ability to nurture human awareness

and association with nature to understand their innermost being. I call this “instinctive knowledge or knowing”. However, Simmons and Dei proffer that colonial Western education barely makes room for this form of knowing. I illustrate the essence of spirituality to Ghanaians in traditional African education in Chapter Four.

9. Anti-colonial theory is a knowledge base that resonates with the colonised through shared colonial awareness. The theory originates fundamentally from the meaning colonised people attach to different forms of oppression. Simmons and Dei (2012) say the anti-colonial framework is “primarily as an epistemology of the oppressed” (p. 76).

10. Teasing out the associations within colonialism, oppression, and change, the theory offers knowledge to initiate social transformation (Kempf in Simmons & Dei, 2012).

11. The dominant, coloniser, oppressor is not ignored in anti-colonial theory; they have a vital role in the decolonising project. The coloniser must be willing to act as a change agent in the course of transformation by acting responsibly through politics of accountability. Kempf in Simmons and Dei (2012) notes that “dominant bodies must work primarily against the oppression by which they are privileged and in which they thus participate” (p. 76). Simmons and Dei (2012) further argue that the idea of “colonial privilege” is crucial to anti-colonialism since it grants an opportunity to demand probity from the privileged. Simmons and Dei (2012) claim that: “for dominant bodies, working with the power of ‘colonial privilege’ should be an important entry point to theorize anti-colonial politics” (p. 76). In this regard, it becomes essential to expose people with power and authority in Ghana to the tenets of anti-colonialism both theoretically and as praxis. Awareness is not only relevant to the subjugated but also to the dominant – the latter must realise the possibility of revolts as a consequences of continued domination and exploitation. These revolts, expressed sometimes in locally orchestrated coups, bring unpleasant consequences particularly for the privileged, and this possibility should trigger and guide their thrust for change. Moreover, it is in the interest of the privileged to attempt to ameliorate the asymmetrical power structures and privilege to ensure a more modest and sustainable benefit from society. This point informs the auxiliary research question on the means to translate the privilege of H.E into a sense of responsibility and commitment to the public good.

12. To understand colonial privilege, it is pertinent to adopt a trans-historical analysis since it confronts and destabilizes the insinuation of the “post” in post-colonialism as a product (aftermath). Colonialism is trans-historical because it continues through time (Kempf cited in Simmons & Dei, 2012). In other words, the historical trajectories of colonised societies should give meaning to colonialism.

### **Tensions, Contradictions and Possibilities**

Even with the tensions, contradictions and possibilities in the assumptions of postcolonial and anti-colonial frameworks, the desire for decolonisation in all endeavours remains strong. Although distinct, these frameworks (“anti” and “post” colonial) are quite interconnected given that issues of race, sex, domination, exploitation, class, marginalisation, imposition and so on are central themes across both realms. Furthermore, through different trajectories these perspectives are ultimately concerned with problems of fair power relations, mis/representation, voice, identity, agency, and resistance. The postcolonial and anti-colonial theories shed light on the unequal power relations and touch on concepts like subjectivity, nationalism, and political economy, among many others.

### **Why Anti-colonial?**

The attempt of postcolonial theory to recount the colonial past and its consequences will always make it relevant. However, unlike postcolonial theory, Simmons and Dei’s (2012) anti-colonial theory is not all encompassing; it identifies and confronts what it classifies as colonising traits – notions of exclusivity and superiority, imposition and domination, and how these shape social relationships. Thus, it is pragmatic and the twelve prescriptions offer a powerful set of analytical tools for researchers, students and teachers to critically engage and scrutinize colonial tendencies and assumptions in H.E. The expositions provide directions for research in colonised societies in many interrelated ways. For example: issues of organisation, voice and identity in education; education as a means for social action; and commitment to engaging in praxis-oriented inquiry. The theory quite easily translates into praxis to offer agency and focuses specifically on the field of education.

I hold that, to sustain a postcolonial worldview, one requires an immersion into, and consciousness of the anti-colonial to subvert colonial and re-colonial relations. Anti-colonial

theory captures the major themes and tenets of the earliest revolution across Africa to Haiti and the West and back to the liberation struggles in Africa. African successes against enslavement and colonialism have come through an “anti” stance. However, the consciousness necessary to initiate activities towards the emancipation of the Ghanaian mind seems redundant. Accordingly, there is the need for reawakening through H.E.

### **Ghana’s National Anthem – an Anti-colonial Stance**

Ghana’s national anthem offers a strong disposition to anti-colonialism and highlights the necessity of the public cause. The words:

God bless our homeland Ghana, and make our nation great and strong  
Bold to defend forever the cause of Freedom and of Right  
Fill our hearts with true humility make us cherish fearless honesty,  
And help us to resist oppressor’s rule with all our will and might for evermore.

Hail to thy name, O Ghana.  
To thee we make our solemn vow  
Steadfast to build together a nation strong in Unity;  
With our gifts of mind and strength of arm  
Whether night or day, in mist or storm  
In every need whate’er the call may be,  
To serve thee, Ghana, now and evermore.

Raise high the flag of Ghana and one with Africa advance  
Black Star of hope and honour to all who thirst for liberty  
Where the banner of Ghana freely flies may the way to freedom truly lie  
Arise, arise, O sons of Ghanaland and under God march on for evermore.

(Composer: Philip Gbeho <http://www.ghana.gov.gh/index.php/about-ghana/the-national-anthem>)

## **Decolonisation**

Decolonisation and transformation are normally used interchangeably. However, I think decolonisation requires a political consciousness that may be absent in the quest to seek transformations in H.E. For instance, we can transform Ghana's H.E by introducing new courses but that is not decolonisation. I conceive decolonisation in H.E as:

1. Recognising that the knowledge base of Western H.E does not empower the African being as they are objects in the learning experience;
2. De-constructing the prevailing unworthy notions, ideas and positions on Africans; and
3. Re-construction of worthy ideas, notions and perspectives based on African worldviews and making Africans the subject of education.
4. For Africans, as Dei (2006) suggests, "decolonization involves a reclamation of the past, previously excluded in the history of the colonial and colonized nations" (p. 1).

## **How Anti-colonial Theorisations Inform the Various Chapters of this Study**

Colonialism as imposition and domination (Simmons & Dei, 2012), and activities that "reinforce the exclusive notions of belonging, difference and superiority" (Principe cited in Dei, 2006 p.3) inform my conception that H.E in Ghana is colonial. When I offer a historical account of H.E in Ghana in Chapter Four, I adopt the anti-colonial theory's emphasis on the authenticity of the cultural voice to illustrate the essence of traditional African education. I explain in Chapter Five how the schooling process in Ghana confers attributes of exclusivity, difference and superiority. I further argue that imbuing these attributes informs the idea of the educated person in Ghana. Furthermore, anti-colonial theory advocates for the critical interrogation of universities and education in general because they are among the means through which colonial and re-colonising relationships are sustained.

Simmons and Dei's (2012) colonial theory shapes Chapters Six, Seven, Eight and Nine wherein I present an analysis of empirical data and a discussion of results. In Chapter Six I further my position that H.E confers colonial attributes of exclusivity, superiority and difference. I consider how these characteristics continue to manifest in universities and perpetuate how elitist H.E is in Ghana. In Chapter Seven, the basis for enquiring how community service-oriented values (CSOVs) can be inculcated into Ghana's H.E lie in anti-colonial theory's



advocacy for the colonised to shape education in their cultural worldviews. Moreover, the collective outlook of Ghanaians towards social relationships and life, criticisms by theorists like Fanon (2004), Nyerere (1975) and Nkrumah (1973c) that African universities fail to imbue a sense of community in students, lend support to this quest. My personal experiences through school back this mission.

As indicated in the theoretical framework, the periods of enslavement and colonialism demeaned the humanity of Africans. Given also that H.E in Ghana is constructed on Eurocentric worldviews that offer little pride to the African being, Chapter Eight discusses how African pride can be restored in Ghana's H.E. Simmons and Dei's (2012) anti-colonial theory supports this enterprise because it promotes knowledge consciously designed to confront colonial domination. As Fanon (2004) illustrates, the colonial agenda was promoted as protecting Africans from their worst nature. Chapter Nine looks into future possibilities of H.E in Ghana.

In line with the attempt to restore the soiled image of Africans, Chapter Ten illustrates specific areas where Eurocentric constructs demeaned the African. Continuing with anti-colonial theory's prescription to confront colonial domination, I argue for Ghana's universities to reconstruct such worldviews in order to elevate the image of the African. According to Simmons and Dei (2012), anti-colonial theory focuses on the ways imperial, colonial and re-colonial relationships influence and shape education to maintain colonial domination. Kwame Nkrumah and Julius Nyerere are two African scholars who have endeavoured to highlight how colonial relationships shape H.E in Africa. In Chapter Eleven, I present their perspectives on the nature of H.E that will be meaningful to Africans in the confrontation of colonial and re-colonial relationships.

Chapter Twelve explains how colonial and re-colonial relationships in Ghana are sustained politically, socially and economically and need deconstruction. Anti-colonial theory's call for the promotion of indigenous knowledge systems informs Chapter Fourteen where I employ African proverbs as a knowledge base and framework to demonstrate how traditional African philosophical ideas emphasise the public cause in H.E.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has been looking at the phenomena and events that initiated anti-colonial activity. We have traversed issues on imperialism, colonialism and their “neo” forms in contemporary contexts. The chapter argued colonialism and its consequences are schemes of an imperial agenda designed fundamentally for the economic advancement of imperial forces. I illustrate some invasions of Africa and touch on the struggles and movements that led to the end of enslavement and political independence. I contend these resistances, a mix of cultural projection through scholarship, and armed struggle led to the birth of anti and postcolonial persuasions. However, the nature of the “post” theorisation offers limited agency for the colonised and thus illustrates the significant need for a theory that offers agency. This drives me to employ the anti-colonial theory by Simmons and Dei (2012), which is influenced and shaped by the African struggles of the centuries and the literature that it has produced. The crux of anti-colonial theory is for the colonised to be self-determining, find pride in the essence of their being, to offer agency to deconstruct colonial imageries, and construct worthy ones.

The next chapter presents the research design. It touches on philosophical underpinnings of the study (Critical Theory), research approach, methods of data collection employed, action plan, research instrument and people involved as respondents, empirical data collection procedure, and data analyses. Issues bordering on trustworthiness of the study are also covered.

## **Section Two: Research Design**

### **Chapter Three: Research Design**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter explains the methodological underpinnings of the study. I provide justifications for the investigative and analytical paths adopted. I discuss the aim of the Critical Theory paradigm and its philosophical positions on epistemology, ontology and methodology in a research enterprise. Also addressed are the people involved, research instruments, data collection procedure, and data analyses.

#### **Critical Theory**

Critical theory emerged in the 1930s and can be traced to the Frankfurt School and Max Horkheimer's work on social theoretic thought, which later became known as critical theory. Horkheimer together with Theodor Adorno, Herbert Marcuse, and other associates of the Institute for Social Research at the University of Frankfurt launched a re-examination of Karl Marx's critique of capitalism and its relation to European society. It was to explore the new forms of exploitation and domination associated with capitalism (Budd, 2008). Aronowitz (2015) see Horkheimer et al's discourses as "firmly wedded to a symbolic politics whose foundation was moralistic rather than Marxist" (p. 105). Fundamentally, critical theory promotes the reflective valuation and critique of society (assessment of present circumstances and the requirements to attain a desired state). It is employed as an umbrella term for a theory founded upon critique. Horkheimer (1982) argues therefore that a theory is critical when it intends "to liberate human beings from the circumstances that enslave them" (p.244). Bhavnani, Chua, and Collins (2014) contend that critical theory "refers to issues of epistemology, power, micropolitics, and resistance" (p.166). To offer an appropriate contextual analysis of power, resistance and knowledge, Horkheimer, Adorno, and Marcuse in Budd (2008) state that history is essential to frameworks that fall under critical theory. As a result, "historical examination was...an important element of analytical method. The historical was not merely artifactual; it was essential to understanding of the social situatedness of contemporary social life" (p. 175). This explains and justifies why I utilise historical accounts especially in the theoretical framework and other chapters. Furthermore, Critical theory has

transcended its explanatory nature of explaining and understanding social conditions to a perspective that can lead to emancipation.

### **Philosophical Underpinnings of Critical Theory as a Research Paradigm**

Lincoln, Lynham, and Guba (2011) identify four main philosophical paradigms where any research can be positioned; positivism, postpositivism, critical theory and constructivism. Creswell (2014) shares similar thoughts but categorises the critical theory perspective as a transformational paradigm because research under this perspective seeks to transform unbalanced power relations in society.

As a broad philosophical paradigm of research, a critical theory paradigm offers a reflective assessment and critique of society with the intention to help people out conditions of oppression. To Fay (1987), issues of empowerment, irrespective of gender, class, and race, are central to critical theory. Lincoln, Lynham, and Guba (2011) state that the research aim of critical theory is to critique, seek change and liberate. Some theoretical perspectives that fall under this paradigm are anti-colonial theory, postcolonial theory, critical pedagogy and many others. These theoretical perspectives under the critical theory paradigm have aims and purposes which frequently converge on themes like emancipation, em/power/ment, enslavement, justice and humanity. However, a distinct feature that significantly distinguishes African anti-colonial frameworks from other critical frameworks is the fact that European and white-Arabian expansionism in Africa and associated acts of enslavement and colonialism were based on the dehumanisation of Africans. As part of the modus operandi was the propagation of African culture(s) as primitive and the projection of Africa as meaningless. Owing to these, African anti-colonial struggles have been primarily to reclaim the Africans' humanity and cultural agency. It is equally worthwhile to add that, these false projections of Africans had Euro-scholarly validation, and these outlooks shape/d much of European literature that came along with European universities in colonial Africa. The schooling process becomes a means to 'run from self'– self-hate. Therefore, the need to interrogate colonial education cannot be understated.

This study centres on issues relating to power, class, and privilege conferred through the acquisition of H.E and the consequent social relationships in Ghana. This, coupled with the adoption of the anti-colonial framework described in Chapter Two situates this study within

the Critical Theory paradigm since it seeks to help conscientise and liberate the highly schooled Ghanaian from “circumstances that enslave them” (Horkheimer, 1982 p.244).

Generally in educational and social science research, the theoretical position of a study influences the philosophical paradigm of research it is inclined to situate. For instance, this study adopts an anti-colonial framework advocating for Ghanaian H.E to acknowledge and respect African worldviews and perspectives because the dominant Western paradigms that shape Ghana’s H.E do not adequately empower the Ghanaian student. Considering the four main philosophical paradigms; positivism, postpositivism, critical theory and constructivism indicated by Lincoln, Lynham, and Guba (2011), the study situates best within the critical theory paradigm owing to both perspectives convergence on a “concern with liberation” (p. 116). I find this consciousness necessary to help reorient Ghana’s H.E, make students the subject of the education experience, and by creating an emancipatory education process.

### **Research Approach – Qualitative**

Given that the anti-colonial framework falls within the philosophical realms of the critical theory research paradigm, the research paradigm consequently influences the research approach to be employed. There are three broad research approaches: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed methods. Due to critical theory’s intent to offer a reflective valuation and critique of society and its institutions, studies of these nature require in-depth interrogation of society and phenomenon. Similarly, considering the epistemological, ontological and methodological positions aforementioned, a qualitative approach is most suitable. As Lincoln, Lynham, and Guba (2011) suggest, qualitative research permits researchers to advance a deeper understanding of a subject and offer research methods that afford the prospect for a systematic, in-depth appraisal of an enquiry which otherwise would be difficult to thoroughly answered quantitatively. A qualitative approach was thus deemed most appropriate for this research because it offers a better opportunity to provide in-depth understanding of the subject matter, that is, of colonial H.E, its vestiges and the need for decolonisation to initiate an enhanced social relationship in Ghana. Furthermore, a qualitative approach provided the best avenue to investigate the research questions.

## **Design – Critical Studies**

Continuing with the chain of influences in the educational research process, the research approach used, in this case qualitative, also influences the nature of research design. Considering the critical nature of the anti-colonial framework adopted in this study, I employ McMillan and Schumacher's (2010) critical studies design for this study. McMillan and Schumacher see critical studies as a research design which employs diverse methods to investigate asymmetrical power relations among people, groups and societies. The ultimate desire of this design is to seek transformation and thus encourage researchers employing a critical study design to advocate for and stimulate change towards an enhanced social relationship. The explanation of McMillan and Schumacher justify the multi perspectival methodology I used for the study (this is explained in detail in a subsequent section). Additionally, Bhavnani, Chua, and Collins (2014) also assert that researchers "would agree that whereas qualitative research does not, by definition, insist on a nonpositivist way of examining the social world, for critical approaches to be truly critical, an antipositivist approach is the *sine qua non* of critical research (p.166). Considering the suggestion by Bhavnani, Chua, and Collins (2014) and in line with the philosophical outlook of critical theory and the aims of critical studies design, I find the critical studies design is appropriate because it assesses H.E in Ghana and points out flaws, errors and conceptual limitations that continue to create an 'enslaver-enslaved' relationships (power inequalities), un-meaningful H.E process, the sustained disregard for African perspectives in H.E and the lack of African agency. Specifically, the research seeks to find out how privilege, "class", and power acquired through Ghana's H.E can be translated to serve societal good. McMillan and Schumacher (2010), continue to state that critical studies design emphasizes ideas like "dignity, dominance, oppressed, authority, empowerment, inequality, and social justice" (p. 347).

## **Methods of Data Collection Employed**

McMillan and Schumacher (2010) note that "observation" and "interviews" are common methods employed in critical studies (p. 347). Denzin and Lincoln (2011a) also mention that qualitative research is "inherently multimethod" (p. 5), albeit there is an imperative to provide sound rationale. Accordingly, I employed an autobiography to illustrate my locatedness, a literature review, and face-to-face interviews as methods for this study.

## Action Plan

Research Questions	Data Needed	Methods	Analysis	Purpose
1. What does it mean to be educated in Ghana?	Lived experience	Autobiography	The education environment, teaching, and learning	How an educated person is recognised in Ghana
2. What are the main features of the historical development of H.E in Ghana?	Secondary data	Literature Review	Historical analysis of the conceptions in traditional African and Western perspectives	To present the different notions and purposes of H.E traditionally (African), during colonialism and contemporarily
3. How elitist is H.E in Ghana?	Primary data	Fieldwork. Interviews through semi-structured interview guide	Manually by presenting the themes in the responses	To explore ways to mitigate the asymmetrical power relationships in H.E
4. What are the alternative means of funding H.E in Ghana?	Primary data	Fieldwork Interviews through semi-structured interview guide	Manually by presenting the themes in the responses	Borders on access and de-commercialisation of H.E
5. What is the possible future of H.E in Ghana?	Primary data	Fieldwork Interviews through semi-structured interview guide	Manually by presenting the themes in the responses	Relevance of H.E

**Table 1**

*Summary of How Research Questions were Answered*

### ***Question 1 – What does it mean to be educated in Ghana?***

To answer this, I employed my experiences throughout school to illustrate the process of education and consequent characteristics that identify the highly schooled. Autobiography is a reflection on events of the past and a careful presentation of such accounts. Pictures and other artefacts help to illustrate the accounts presented in narratives (see Ellis, Adams & Bochner, 2011). While this method locates me in the study (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010) and offers insights into the broader outlook of H.E in Ghana, it comes with its shortfalls. Autobiography is criticised as “being too artful and not scientific, or too scientific and not sufficiently artful” and self-centred (Ellis et al., 2011, p. 283). Delamont in Ellis et al. (2011) accuses autobiography (as part of autoethnography) as lacking extensive fieldwork. Anderson, in Ellis et al. (2011), contends that the use of personal experience makes autobiography biased.

I acknowledge these inadequacies and the shortcomings of human memory, hence my concentration on events during my university education. Furthermore, for my experience not to appear isolated, I engaged with other autobiographical accounts and literature to support my accounts to provide rigour. As Ellis et al. (2011) suggest, the credibility of the writer offers reliability in autobiography and the realistic nature of the account is the scale to measure validity. The strengths of autobiography are its ability to “reduce prejudice” on a phenomenon, and “encourage personal responsibility and agency” (Ellis et al., 2011, p. 280).

### ***Question 2 – What are the main features of the historical development of H.E in Ghana?***

I employed secondary data (literature) in this regard. According to Neuman (2006), an extended literature review as a method gives the opportunity to explore the vast materials on a study. Literature provides a worthy source of information due to the dynamism and diversities in humanity. It is the basis of building and enhancing knowledge, skills and attitudes as the foundation of educational research. A literature review grants credibility to the study as a “good review increases a reader’s confidence in the researcher’s professional confidence, ability and background” (Neuman, 2006, p. 111). To Neuman, an extended literature review locates the study in a framework and “demonstrates its relevance by making connections to a body of knowledge” (p. 111). Further, “a good review points out areas where prior studies agree, where they disagree, and where major questions remain”. In addition, it “identifies blind alleys and suggests hypotheses for replication” (Neuman, 2006, p. 111).



As part of my extensive literature review, I employ the works and speeches of prominent African Presidents and scholars to make a case for the type of H.E that would be meaningful in Ghana. Similarly, I employ academic literature and views of a former Ghanaian President and other political leaders to argue that colonial relations are still present in Ghana. Furthermore, I employ proverbs in the final epilogue as an embodiment of African oral traditions and culture as an example of an African knowledge base that can shape H.E. I utilise selected proverbs to argue that H.E in African perspectives promotes the public purpose.

### ***Fieldwork – Questions 3, 4, and 5***

Fieldwork is integral to many forms of research including qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods. It helps to comprehend and appreciate many social phenomena. Indeed, many academic disciplines are both fields of theory and practice – and fieldwork is also integral to the disciplines. Peake and Trotz (1999) acknowledge the significance of fieldwork: “it can strengthen our commitment to conduct good research based on building relations of mutual respect and recognition. It does, however, entail abandoning the search for objectivity in favour of critical provisional analysis based on plurality of (temporally and spatially) situated voices and silences” (p. 37).

By employing an autobiographical approach, historical and philosophical perspectives, literary and empirical views as part of the methodology to the study, I provide a multi-perspective approach (different angles) to the study.

### **Research Instrument**

I used a semi-structured interview guide as the instrument to conduct the interviews. This was important to help elicit detailed information on the subject. Interviews are useful to elicit detailed account of knowledge and insight into realities (Geertz, 1973). Denzin (2001) describes thick description as “deep, dense, detailed accounts” (p. 98), which provide alternative perspectives to that of the researcher. McMillan and Schumacher (2010) also note that critical studies are multi-method and say, “...observation and interviewing are used most often. The key is to gather the right form of information that will support the advocacy desired” (p. 347–348).

## **People Involved (Respondents)**

The respondents for this study were people who work or had worked within Ghana's public universities. I had a proxy who helped identify and made initial contact with prospective respondents. I interviewed a retired Professor who is the Chairman of a university council. He has been advocating over the decades for education in Ghana to reflect African culture and worldview. I accepted the recommendation from my proxy to interview him. He is vastly knowledgeable and inclined toward African worldviews. It was important to get such an individual at the apex of university decision-making to offer some insight on the inner dealings of universities. Another respondent was a former Pro-Vice Chancellor of a public university who is on a post-retirement contract. His past role in the university equips him to offer reason why the status quo remains and the difficulties associated with transformation. It is difficult to tell his biases but he does not seem entrenched on specific worldviews.

A former Registrar of a public university who happens to hold a Ph.D was also interviewed because Registrars in Ghanaian universities are in charge of the day-to-day administration of the university, and hence have rich knowledge on the administrative setup of public universities. His strengths lie in administration. There was a traditional ruler (paramount Chief) who happens to be a Professor in a public university. He is predisposed to favour African worldviews and sheds light on how difficult or easy it is to fuse African worldviews in the university structure. His knowledge and promotion of ancient African history and African American studies indicates his inclinations. The next respondent was a Christian Reverend Minister who is also a Senior Lecturer. His specialization is in Performing Arts and how theatre can be used to develop societies. His works indicate immense African cultural advocacy despite being a Christian priest.

I interviewed a former director of an Institute in a public university (position equal to a Dean). He is a Senior Lecturer in the field of Education and his inclinations are quite difficult to tell. The next respondent is a playwright and Lecturer who, prior to his academic life, held a top position in an international development agency. He was selected due to his knowledge of Ghanaian developmental issues and his deep insight into African cultural worldviews. Furthermore, I interviewed a respondent with expertise in Development Studies. He is a senior research fellow at the social division of an institute in a public university. Lastly, there was a linguist who is interested in African liberation and consciousness. His works and views are

very critical of the West. He is very knowledgeable in African culture and ancient African history. Cumulatively, the respondents have accrued over 200 years of experience working in universities.

### **Empirical Data Collection Procedure**

I had a proxy in Ghana who agreed to help identify and make initial contact with potential respondents. Although he once held a high position in a public university, he had no power or control over the respondents. After the respondents agreed to participate, I liaised with the proxy to arrange a meeting and scheduled the interviews. Prior to the interview, I sent the interview guide to the respondents via e-mail so they could form their thoughts on the issues therein.

The respondents expressed interest in the study and offered lots of encouragement. Even though I desired to interview females, the ethical approval I received from The University of Auckland did not permit me to contact potential respondents so as earlier stated, it was the responsibility of the proxy to find potential respondents. He made efforts to locate female scholars who could contribute to the study but all efforts to get people he knew could help proved futile. They were either busy or out of the country. It would also be worthwhile to mention that Ghana's academe is significantly male dominated and given the limited timeframe I had to conduct the fieldwork, the ethical restrictions and the scope of the proxy's network, I had to use the respondents who agreed to participate. I scheduled the interviews for an hour but most of them offered more than an hour. They were also willing for follow-up communication. Some offered references and suggested books that would contribute to the research.

It was daunting and quite intimidating going to interview such high profile personalities. Voices like, "Are the questions going to make sense to them, and do I know enough to engage an intellectual discussion with these people?" kept echoing in my mind. Despite these "butterflies", I was assured that the questions were shaped by concerns and gaps in literature. I also had it in mind that I was on a mission to learn.

Nevertheless, the process came with obstacles. There were several instances where we rescheduled meetings because the respondents were unavailable. In some instances, they had impromptu engagements so they "sacrificed" our scheduled meeting. The classic experience

was driving for about 150km from Accra to another region only to find the respondent chairing a function that closed late. He informed me of his schedule but we both thought the programme would finish early. At the end, he was visibly exhausted and had to drive about 80km home (in another region). He asked me to sleep over and make the 80km to his house the next day for the interview. I made the journey but did not get to see him immediately as there were many people waiting to see him. Eventually, when I had the opportunity to meet him, my lack of traditional Ghanaian knowledge of the protocols expected in a Chief's palace was severely exposed. His elders and members of his council would not entertain English/Western protocols, so I had to fall on the limited Palace protocols I know to navigate that space. He nevertheless was extremely helpful and introduced me to many other scholars. From a Western perspective, these issues border on "power" but the African in me acknowledged that these delays were not intentional, though frustrating and expensive. It was obvious they were busy; besides, I saw their acceptance to participate as a favour as there were no payments or incentives. There is an African proverb that "With patience, one can dissect the ant and see its intestines".

## **Data Analyses**

To quote Patton (2002), "qualitative analysis transforms data into findings. No formula exists for that transformation. Guidance, yes. But no recipe. Direction can and will be offered, but the final destination remains unique for each inquirer, known only when – and if – arrived at" (p. 432). My data analyses began with the growth of the thesis. In the course of writing the theoretical perspectives and the literature review, some thematic areas began to emerge. The major themes bordered on notions of elitism in Ghanaian/African H.E, a lack of community-oriented values in Ghanaian/African H.E, and the African renaissance and pride. I employed these as pre-determined themes to formulate research questions in the interview guide. Therefore the responses were to answer questions that came out of these themes.

I analysed the field data manually by adopting an inductive approach of qualitative data analysis. I transcribed the interviews into text and "separated [it] into workable units" (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010, p. 369). I organised the responses and grouped them under the various research questions and read the transcripts thoroughly to identify comments pertinent to answer the research questions. I highlighted these comments and looked out for new observations and insights that could offer other understandings to the study. I examined the field transcripts to identify emerging themes and patterns, made interpretations out of the

themes, and considered them in regard to the literature and theoretical framework. I subsequently present the findings and discussions in anecdotes (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010).

### **Credibility**

Credibility in qualitative studies refers to the extent to which findings and analyses of the study are realistic (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). To ensure this, I designed the interview guide based on issues raised in literature. In addition, I endeavoured to interview different people with different expertise within the university structure. Although I could not get any respondent from government institutions, the respondents offered worthy responses as some have occupied different positions in government institutions.

A technique I employed to enhance credibility of the study was to send the transcribed interview to the respondents via e-mail for them to confirm the transcription appropriately captured their thoughts. I consequently provide detailed narratives from the respondents to present their voices. Given that the respondents did not object to the transcripts, the quotations offered in the analysis chapter of this study reflect the empirical data collected.

### **Reflexivity**

Chilisa (2012) argues that the closeness between the researcher and respondents may affect the truth value of research as it becomes difficult to distinguish between their experiences. In this study, I acknowledge my biases, and clearly illustrate and justify them both in my theoretical and methodological perspectives – that H.E in Ghana is colonial. The nature of Critical Theory and critical studies makes the issue of reflexivity quite tricky as the research is shaped and designed by the biases that must be checked. Being conscious of my biases, I left the selection of respondents in the hands of a third party. Moreover, the respondents are established academics who I could barely influence – especially regarding what to say. I also devoted significant space to the voices of the respondents in the analysis chapter to clearly illustrate their thoughts and maintain the truth value of the study.

Although triangulation helps in addressing trustworthiness of qualitative studies, the nature and status of my respondents made triangulation quite impossible. I could not use independent auditors, as suggested by Lincoln and Guba (1985), due to ethical restrictions. However, by

sending the transcribed interviews to the respondents to validate, I was able to enhance the credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability of this study, ensuring trustworthy findings that a reader could transfer and generalise in a similar space.

## **Conclusion**

In this chapter, I have outlined the research design used in the research. I have argued that adopting a qualitative approach is appropriate to answer the research questions. Employing a critical studies framework justifies the aim of helping transform social relations between the schooled and unschooled in Ghana. It offers empowerment to students of Ghana's H.E by offering alternative perspectives to help emancipate the schooled from dominant Western perspectives. Through my proxy, I was able to interview knowledgeable people in Ghanaian universities who offered rich information on how H.E can serve a public purpose. I used the inductive method of qualitative data analysis by highlighting responses that answer the research questions. The emerging themes from responses were synthesised and presented as anecdotes.

The next chapter presents the main features of the historical development of H.E in Ghana. The meaning of H.E traditionally and what it has become contemporary. The chapter will argue that H.E has shifted from primarily the nurture of character to the cultivation of humans as means of production and commerce.

## **Section Three: Context of the Study**

### **Chapter Four: The Historical Development of H.E in Ghana – (Taken Away from Roots and Given Different “Truths”)**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter presents the main features of the historical development of H.E in Ghana. It is a discussion on the purposes of traditional African H.E and Western H.E in Ghana. I begin by discussing traditional African education, what it means, its purposes, manifestations and scope. I use these to illustrate the purpose of traditional African education, which is to cultivate ethical values to nurture character and to enhance a person’s humanity for the sustenance of society. The emphasis of traditional African education was for the general good of society and inculcated the economic, social, economic, aesthetic and spiritual aspects into the process of education. Originally, H.E in Africa did not seek to confer notions of superiority or exclusivity even though such attributes were likely to form a part of the education of royal families. The essence of H.E was preparation for life; it is holistic and a means to preserve cultural heritage. Traditional African education has had a social emphasis since antiquity.

I continue the historical trajectory of H.E in Ghana by offering accounts of foreign education in Ghana. I provide a brief account of Islamic education in Africa from the 7<sup>th</sup> century AD and how it has spread across Africa. Despite the spread, the influence of Islamic education in Ghana is quite minimal. Western forms of education began with Christian missionaries in the 16<sup>th</sup> century who spread Christianity. They started constructing schools in the 19<sup>th</sup> century primarily for English literacy and numeracy, and as a conduit to convert people to Christianity. The onset of colonialism in the same period institutionalised the European school in Ghana with a focus on literacy and numeracy. The struggle for the establishment of universities in West Africa commenced in Sierra Leone in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and similar to the early schools had an immense Christian influence. The struggle moved across West Africa and Ghana eventually had its first university college in 1948. The focus of Western H.E was to nurture people for the colonial bureaucratic structure, therefore H.E was work-based and its content was European. The economic emphasis has continued to shape Ghanaian H.E and the country now has over sixty public and private universities.

I bring to the fore features of traditional African H.E and highlight central themes like respect for humanity, unity in action, collectivism, a sense of community and communality, ethics, spirituality, togetherness, collaborations and selflessness, which I contend are largely missing in Ghana's universities. Therefore, while traditional African education over the centuries underscores the cultivation of ethical values to nurture character to enhance a person's humanity, the Western notion, as introduced in Ghana, emphasises productivity and thus "education for work". While I do not intend or attempt to portray traditional African education as utopian and pure, I seek to define the quintessence of traditional African education that has been left on the margins of H.E in Ghana. However, this enterprise should neither thwart nor blind Ghanaians to other positive worldviews.

## **African Education**

### **Traditional African Education**

Traditional African educational systems have always existed and contributed to the Nile Valley civilisations and many empires and kingdoms on the continent, for example Great Zimbabwe, Zulu, ancient Ghana, Mali, Dahomey and Ile-Ife. Nonetheless, Laurie (1907) excluded "sub-Saharan" Africa while studying a historical survey of pre-Christian education. Laurie commenced with Egypt and concluded with the Rome, and equated education with civilization and culture, and judged sub-Saharan Africa as primitive because it lacked education. Murray (1967) contended that apart from Egypt, Africa has no indigenous history. However, Diop (1974), an African Egyptologist, argues that ancient Egyptians were black Africans and the civilisation was African with African influences from Kush and Axum (Ethiopia) and Nubia (Sudan). Furthermore, most of the great achievements in Kemit (ancient Egypt) were complete prior to the earliest invasions, for instance the Sphinx (circa 2600 BCE) and the pyramids of Giza (2580–2560 BCE). I discuss Kemit further in Chapter Ten. However, I refer to traditional African education largely as education post-Africa's classical civilisations, albeit I occasionally touch on the civilisation in Kemit.

### **Meaning of Traditional African Higher/Education**

Traditional African education denotes the methods of teaching and learning among Africans, which are based on indigenous knowledge systems accumulated over the centuries (Merriam,



2007). According to Bray, Clarke and Stephens (1998), there were many systems of traditional African education prior to colonisation. Even though generalisation may be tricky, African educator Ocitti (1973) captures the common philosophical and sociological basis of traditional African education in five principles:

1. Preparationism: preparing people for life and guiding them into acquiring specific skills to play specific roles in society.
2. Functionalism: education to help people operate in society.
3. Communalism: the sense of communism and collective responsibility.
4. Perennialism: education is a means to retain cultural heritage.
5. Holisticism: this is the holistic nature of African education.

These principles can be seen in the discussion on the salient features of African education, which are discussed further in this chapter.

### **H.E in the Traditional African Context**

Although traditional African education may seem fluid, it is quite structured. Moments of transitions are identified through physical and behavioural indicators and observed accordingly. Adulthood in African societies usually commences at the onset of puberty (Nukunya, 2003) and since education advances in that period, I classify education from that period to adulthood as traditional African H.E. Avoseh (2013) supports the view, indicating that proverbs are pedagogical tools in traditional African adult and H.E and have a wide network of associations that serve as centres of higher learning. It is a period for coaching, preparation and initiation to assume leadership from the family unit to society. Initiation into adulthood is typically based on satisfying specific conditions set by society. However, consideration, selection and initiation into the council of elders (governing council) requires a deep appreciation and display of culture. Eldership is not merely an opportunity to wear a badge of nobility but a period of solemn responsibilities and arduous tasks. The ability to perform these responsibilities credibly translates into the reverence, admiration and high regard

accorded to elders. Elders guard material and immaterial resources for inter-generational transfer. The inability of an individual to navigate these processes of education does not only endanger the individual's survival but also that of other members of society, so efforts are made to ensure success (Avoseh, 2013; Nukunya, 2003; Marah, 2006; Obiakor 2004; Okoro, 2010). I now discuss the salient features of traditional African education – Community Centeredness, Lifelong and Gender Based, Skills Acquisition and Pedagogical Approaches and Learning Techniques, Length of Skills Acquisition, Curriculum of Traditional African Education, Belief in Supreme Being, Formal/Informal Debate, and The Educated: A Traditional African Perspective.

### **Community Centeredness**

The community is vital in every facet of traditional African life. It grants identity to citizens, hence there is a reciprocal relationship and a different hierarchy of authority ensures alignment with social expectations. Therefore, Achebe (2008) asserts that a child from birth is the “property” of a community. While Gwanfogbe (2011) bases the community-centred philosophy on a lifelong association with society, Tangwa (2011) centres it on the perpetuation of society.

Values like peaceful habitation, reciprocity, moderation, solidarity, truthfulness, honesty, respect for authority, and tolerance are primary in traditional African notions of education (Obiakor, 2004; Gwanfogbe, 2011; Achebe, 2008). Obiakor (2004) and Letseka (2000) contend that, despite the role of community, the immediate family bore primary responsibility for nurturing. Nevertheless, an older person could reprimand a younger person in society. Higgs (2003) therefore writes that:

Traditional education in Africa is distinguished by the importance attached to its collective and social nature, as well as its intimate tie with social and communal life. Education, then, in the traditional African setting cannot, and indeed, should not, be separated from life itself. It is a natural process by which the child gradually acquires skill, knowledge, and attitudes appropriate to life in his or her community – an education inspired by a spirit of “ubuntu” in the service of the community. (p. 16)

While the community-based approach to traditional African education can be argued as a limitation due to its scope, any education worth its salt must be located within a specific

geography. In support, Nsamenang and Tchombe (2011) say, “Education always occurs in a specific ecological and cultural context. The eco-culture shapes the educational environment, as every facet of education is deeply influenced by the local context” (p. 11).

On the politics of locality, Wane (2009) argues that attempts by some Western educators to synchronise all forms of knowing into a singular framework intends to alienate an African perspective:

One of the strategies of Western European models of schooling was to universalize education. However, what the promoters of this grand idea did not spell out was that the internationalization of curriculum would be skewed towards a Eurocentric paradigm and, in particular, British and French. There was no consideration of local knowledge or local peoples’ everyday experiences. Such knowledge was seen as either non-existent or of little or no value. (p. 161)

As an African, the case for “universal” education becomes contentious when I encounter highly schooled non-Africans who express little knowledge about Africa. Ake (2012) contends this proves the imperialistic nature of the Western academy and its overarching desire to preserve hegemony.

Overall, African scholars like Marah (2006), Moumouni (1968), Ocitti (1973), Obiakor (2004) and Nukunya (2003) assert traditional African education is broad-based and holistic. Learning and its developmental activities are gradual and continuous through the different stages of growth. Learning commences from the home, and continues steadily through society and social institutions through adolescence to adulthood. This is the communalism Ocitti (1973) mentions. In Achebe’s book, *Things Fall Apart* (2008), Okonkwo (a character in the story) reiterates the importance of community:

A man who calls his kinsmen to a feast does not do so to save them from starving. They all have food in their own homes. When we gather together in the moonlit village ground it is not because of the moon. Every man can see it in his own compound. We come together because it is good for the kinsmen to do. ...I fear for you young people because you do not understand how strong is the bond of kinship. You do not know what it is to speak with one voice. (p. 133–134)

## **Lifelong and Gender Based**

Traditional African education is lifelong and incorporates the social, cultural, artistic, religious, and recreational life of society and thus mirrors society. Knowledge of traditions, history, folklore and vital information are shared at specific times. Since most of these educational activities are in age groups, there is a sequence for teaching different ages and importantly what to teach (Tedla, 1992; Obiakor, 2004; Avoseh, 2013).

Gender roles are important in traditional African education and influence the orientation of education. Education for females centres on effective motherhood, worthy wives, and prudent application of knowledge. For males, it was fatherhood, family and community protectors, dutiful husbands and being wise. Values of social cohesion and appreciation of cultural norms and ethos are gender neutral (Nukunya, 2003; Achebe, 2008; Tangwa, 2011). This captures Ocitti's (1973) ideas of preparationism and functionalism.

## **Skills Acquisition and Pedagogical Approaches and Learning Techniques**

Pedagogical techniques in education vary depending on the age group involved. Storytelling is prominent in formative years while riddles, games, gymnastics, dances, and individual and group tasks are common in early teens. Proverbs and experiential learning appear during H.E and apprenticeship is predominant during skills acquisition. Practice, repetition, imitation, internalization and observation are learning skills in education (Nukunya, 2003; Marah, 2006; Obiakor, 2004; Okoro, 2010).

Typically, early adolescence commences the period for skills acquisition. Even though occupations are largely products of geographic location, people either choose their preferred professions or are co-opted into the family occupation. According to Nukunya (2003), in instances where a profession outside the skill set of the family is preferred, an expert is sought to conduct training and education. Males acquire skills as hunters, builders, agriculturalists, blacksmiths (jewellers), miners, herbalists (doctors), traders (business persons) among others. Female skills include dressmaking, beauticians, bakers, caterers, traders and fishmongers, midwifery among others. However, professions like trading, agri-business, medicine cut across sexes and specific families become renowned for expertise in specific occupations due to

extensive practice (Nukunya, 2003; Obiakor, 2004; Tangwa, 2011; Adeyemi & Adeyinka, 2002).

### **Length of Skills Acquisition**

Several factors account for the length of training and education. Education is longer when it entails detailed rituals and rites and completion of specific initiations. Cameroonian scholars Fonka and Banboye (cited in Tangwa, 2011) contend that acquiring both theoretical knowledge and practical skills in certain professions in Cameroon can be lengthy. Illustrating roles in royal households, they say “...among the Nso’ of the grassy highlands of Bamenda in the Northwest region of Cameroon, education in the two principal lodges attached to the royal palace, Nwerong and Ngiri, lasted for about 8 years” (p. 97). Apprentices are secluded during the process and after the lengthy education “...earned the title of ‘Shey’ with the privilege among others of founding a lineage. The procedure for the acquisition of wives for graduates of these lodges was well laid down in the tradition” (p. 97). Tangwa (2011) cites another Cameroonian case where, “Apprenticeship in professions and trades such as blacksmithing, wood carving, healing, wine tapping, basket making, mat weaving, drumming and dancing, etc. took variously anything from 3 years upwards” (p. 97). Overall, the processes of skills acquisition are extensive and require a lot of determination and self-will to complete. These processes are vital as it contributes to the attainment of adulthood.

### **Belief in Supreme Being**

The belief in the Supreme Being has shaped education in Africa since antiquity. In Kemit (ancient Egypt) the belief was that the only thing that existed with the Divine was Ma’at, the foremost ethical principle. The principles of Ma’at – truth, justice, morality, order, reciprocity, harmony, balance and law – governed Kemit, and education was intended to help people find Ma’at. The notion was that the inability to achieve Ma’at brings chaos, and thus the need for consensus was emphasized (Asante, 2012; Karenga, 2003). The supernatural continues to hold significance in African worldviews and Nukunya (2003) illustrates the Ghanaian orientation to the supernatural, life after death, and how it tends to influence African education:

...death does not mark the end of life. When death occurs, it is only the physical body that is affected but the soul goes to the land of spirits to join other departed souls. In the

land of the spirits, the dead are able to watch over the affairs of the earthly world, punishing offenders and rewarding those who conform to accepted ways and put up exemplary behaviours. (p. 245)

A Cameroonian academic, Tangwa (2011), asserts that spirituality binds traditional African education systems to culture and ethics; both share similar metaphysical worldviews and goals despite the diversity of these systems. Anything else will not only be unfamiliar but isolating in any education in Africa. The ethical prescription makes it a taboo for a traditional doctor to recommend to a pregnant woman any herb or mixture of herbs to abort pregnancy. It is equally a taboo for a hunter with expertise of vegetation to sell or give a non-edible species of any animal to others. Ethics are emphasized because "...the practice of any profession or trade in the traditional setting always involved ritual restrictions and taboos, calculated to prevent abuse of specialized knowledge" (p. 97). Violating these ethical norms requires, "ritual expiation, cleansing and purification; otherwise, the violators were liable to encounter serious misfortune" (p. 97).

The belief among Africans is that human supplications for blessing or clemency to the Supreme Being depend on the moral uprightness of society. Moreover, the communal nature of Africans and inter-relatedness form chains of relationships. This relationship demonstrates the extensive effects of any individual's immorality, hence a collective responsibility as non-adherence transcends the individual (Tangwa, 2011; Nukunya, 2003). Tangwa (2011) therefore espouses that:

The obsession with human character or behaviour is an obsession about ethics in human acts and actions. This obsession was central in African traditional systems of education and should remain fundamental in "modernized" systems because, within African cultures, every individual is perceived as essentially a relational being whose acts and actions or behaviour impact directly on others in the family/community, a community of significant others in ever widening concentric circles of relatedness. (p. 93)

### **Formal/Informal Debate**

To say traditional African education is strictly informal prior to Western schools would be inadequate as ample evidence attests to some form and structure even though not in equal

measure as that introduced in the Western school. Learning and performance of education activities like legends, folksongs and folktales, proverbs, and dances are unlikely to be unsystematic. Moreover, apprenticeship to acquire skills must also follow some structure because Scalon (1964) mentions centres for training traditional African education. Tangwa's (2011) reference to trainee programmes in agriculture, healthcare and carving lasting three years and over should employ some structure. Therefore, as Rodney (2009) elucidates, "the colonizer did not introduce education into Africa: they introduced a new set of formal education institutions, which were partly supplemented and partly replaced those which were there before" (p. 293).

### **Curriculum of Traditional African Education**

The curriculum in traditional African education is largely unwritten yet very detailed and covers every aspect of life. Okoro (2010) states that, "The African traditional education curriculum, though not documented, was quite elaborate, embracing all aspects of human development. The content of the curriculum includes: mental broadening, physical fitness, moral uprightness, religious deference, good social adjustment and interaction" (p. 144). It endeavours to nurture holistically. The process of education as earlier mentioned is carried out and monitored primarily by the immediate family, larger society and or the expert undertaking the activity. It is monitored behaviourally where the exhibited behaviour and attitudes of the individual is expected to conform to the expected norms of society or a profession. For instance, an individual who struggles to interact with other people in society is identified by the family or immediate community and helped to nurture that attribute given the importance of interdependency in African culture. Education can also be measured intellectually through actions and thoughts expected of a particular age group. When the expected results are not seen, then those in charge of education endeavour to find the means to address the challenges. The scope of the curriculum of traditional African education has been captured in the aforementioned characteristics of traditional African education presented in this section.

### **The Educated: A Traditional African Perspective**

The discussion thus far and the views of Tangwa (2011), Nukunya (2003), Okoro (2010), and Achebe (2008) indicate that traditional African education emphasised character development and the educated is a person with worthy character and humanity. Fafunwa (1974) states that

the educated person in an African context is “... honest, respectable, skilled, cooperative and conforms to the social order of the day” (p. 20).

Akinpelu (1987) extensively conceptualises the educated person in African perspectives as:

...One who combines expertise in some specific economic skills with soundness of character and wisdom in judgement. He is one who is equipped to handle successfully the problems of living in his immediate and extended family; who is well versed in the folklores and genealogies of his ancestors; who has some skill to handle some minor health problems and where to obtain advice and help in major ones; who stands well with the ancestral spirits of his family and knows how to observe their worship; who has the ability to discharge his social and political duties; who is wise and shrewd in judgement; who expresses himself not in too many words but rather in proverbs and analogies....who is self controlled under provocation, dignified in sorrow and restrained in success; and finally and most importantly, who is of excellent character. (p. 178–179)

Uduigwomen (2009) offers that the educated person is one “who has good social inter-personal relationships with other members of his community, who is economically fruitful (at least enough to cater for his immediate needs), who makes positive contributions to community decisions and policies, who discharges his social and political duties” (p. 199). Balogun (2008) puts it as “a function of an aggregate of processes in which a person acquires community cultural knowledge, skills, attitudes, values, beliefs, norms and habits for the survival of the society” (p. 122). The inference from Akinpelu, Uduigwomen, and Balogun’s estimation is that sound values and good character justified a person’s education and were characteristic of a person’s education.

The purpose of traditional African education is to nurture the character of a person to enhance their humanity for the benefit of society. The belief is that appropriate attitudes develop a worthy society. Knowledge and skills without appropriate attitudes is not valuable education in traditional African worldviews. The evidence from Ghana, Nigeria, Cameroon, Kenya, South Africa and Niger illustrate the profound cultural similarities among Africans. These are not isolated; in Kemit (ancient Egypt), education focused on nurturing character and the earliest notions of ethics are the principles of Ma’at: truth, justice, morality, order, reciprocity,



harmony, balance and law governed Kemit (Asante, 2012; Karenga, 2003). Commenting on the emphasis of morality in traditional African education, Tangwa (2011) maintains, “In the domain of morality, correct practice even without articulate theory is always better than correct theory without appropriate practice” (p. 104).

## **Foreign Education in Ghana**

### **Historical Accounts of Islamic Education in Ghana/Africa**

Similar to the spiritual emphasis in traditional African education, Hunter (cited in Gwanfogbe, 2011) says Ibaadi clerics from the Arabian Peninsula pioneered Islamic/Arabic education in Africa around c.647 AD. Gwanfogbe (2011) asserts that it commenced in North Africa, spread into West Africa and the Horn of Africa by the 10th century through trans-Saharan Muslim merchants. The rulers of the Kingdoms of Takur, ancient Ghana, and Gao had been converted to Islam between the 11th and 12th centuries by the Almoravids, and literate Muslims were advisers in those jurisdictions. Peaceful conversions, holy wars, occupation, and enslavement were employed as methods to convert.

Gwanfogbe (2011) observes a strict religious emphasis of Islamic education. The belief is that Prophet Mohammed received God’s final judgment to humankind, which was subsequently enshrined in the Quran. The revelations include views on faith, religious and moral duties of believers, as well as directions on political, social and economic organization of society. Muslims have to acquire literary education as the laws are in the Quran. Prophet Mohammed himself emphasised the importance of literacy in His submission that “...the ink of the scholar is holier than the blood of the martyr” (Brown in Gwanfogbe, 2011, p. 46).

The central Sudanic system based on a blend of Arab and African traditions is still prevalent in some communities (Winters in Gwanfogbe, 2011). The Sudanic system, according to Gwanfogbe (2011), developed the University of Sankore in Timbuktu, a famous hub for comprehensive Islamic studies worldwide. Sankore had faculties of law, medicine, grammar, letters, geography, and industrial arts. Baxter, in Gwanfogbe (2011), estimates there are 3,000 community Quranic schools in Mali’s capital, Bamako, where children aged 4–10 years cram, memorise and recite Quranic verses.

In the early 19th century, Muslims who escaped the Hausa jihads of northern Nigeria also influenced the north-eastern sector of Ghana. The Talimul Islam (T.I.) Ahmadiyya, a Shia sect originating from India in the 19th century is present in the country although most Ghanaian Muslims are Sunni. The diffusion of Islam and “Arabianization” established the basis of the Islamic educational system with the study of the Arabic language and the Quran at its core (Gwanfogbe, 2011). Despite its growth, its educational facilities are not that prominent in Ghana because Islam was for a long time concentrated mainly in the Northern regions of Ghana.

### **European Colonial Era – Christianity and European School Education in Ghana**

European education in Ghana also had a religious basis but like Islamic education, the focus of its teaching was outside the milieu of the Ghanaian. European Christian missionaries introduced European education in Ghana to propagate the Gospel of Christ in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. The missionaries co-opted some Ghanaians to promote and influence the acceptance of Christianity. The converts learnt English to study the Bible and as interpreters to spread the faith. Prior to missionary schools, colonial forts served as centres of learning for Europeans and their offspring. Accordingly, the earliest formal schools in Ghana have roots in these Christian denominations. Nukunya (2003) highlight some of the early institutions – Mfantshipim Boys School (first secondary school in Ghana), which was established in 1876 by indigenous folks, it was later associated with the Methodist church. The Anglicans set up Adisadel College (Boys) in 1910, St. Augustine’s College (Boys) in 1930 in Cape Coast (Roman Catholic), and Odomase Krobo Secondary School (Mixed) in 1938 in Krobo (Basel Mission – Presbyterian). The Methodists also established Wesley Girls High School, the first girls’ school in 1958, although its history as a school dates back to 1836.

With respect to teacher training colleges, the Basel Mission or Presbyterians founded the Presbyterian Training College in 1848, while the Wesleyan Mission (Methodist) in Kumasi in 1924 created Wesley College (Males). The Roman Catholic Mission established OLA (Our Lady of Apostles) Training College (Females) in 1926 in Cape Coast, whereas the Adventist founded the Seventh Day Adventist (SDA) Teacher (SDA) Training College (Mixed) in 1939 in Bekwai.

Nukunya (2003) writes that the missionaries built schools to facilitate the spread of Christianity; therefore, baptism and conversion were conditions to continue schooling. Gwanfogbe (2011) argues that even though missionaries came under the guise of religion, the agenda was to pave way for colonialism leading to institutionalisation of European education in Africa.

### **History of European H.E in Ghana**

The inauguration of the first Western H.E institution in Ghana happened in October 1948, although the struggles towards its realisation predate the 1940s. Achimota School, founded in 1924, served as a “surrogate mother” to European H.E – offering pre-university education, engineering and external degree courses of the University of London at the onset of World War II (Agbodeka, 1998). However, according to Ashby in Maison (2010), H.E “is not new to the continent of Africa, but the modern universities in Africa owe nothing to this ancient scholarship...the universities of Africa have their roots not in any indigenous system of education, but in a system brought from the West” (p. 70).

Continuing on a historical trajectory of Western H.E worldwide, the foremost academies and colleges akin to those of Plato and Aristotle began from the 4<sup>th</sup> Century BC. This era marked the genesis of the residential university. After many centuries, monastic institutions became the conduit for learning just as the Middle Ages oversaw a resurgence of learning in Europe. Italy and Spain attracted scholars across Europe and the structured nature of these centres led to “university” being applied to them – derived from Latin “universitas” meaning corporation. The notion of apprenticeship fashioned the origin of a degree system based on the initial thought of an artist and trainee – trainees became qualified masters in specific disciplines and able to teach others (Olubummo & Ferguson, 1960).

According to Olubummo and Ferguson (1960), the earlier notion and practice of university education were altered progressively just before the end of the Middle Ages. Learning was free from dogma while the search of truth was set as the core aspiration of university education. Scholars prioritised research over teaching and students too did not attend university to train for a particular profession. To Okafor (1971), participation was for the acquisition of knowledge, skills enhancement for scientific research, and for the ability to undertake independent and critical thinking within a broad spectrum.

Turning your attention to Africa, the 19<sup>th</sup> century initiated the desire to establish European universities institutions in West Africa due to the elite status of H.E. The movement to push for a university in West Africa started in Sierra Leone. In 1871, Christian missionaries contacted Henry Venn, a visionary of the Church Mission Society (CMS), to garner support to establish university education at Fourah Bay. Although fruitless at the onset, unremitting pressure subdued the colonists. Ashby (1966) reports that in 1872, Dr. Edward Wilmot Blyden, a Liberian scholar, initiated a campaign for a West African university, insisting the university must be “native-controlled”. Okafor (1971) states that owing to Blyden’s views on Christianity, Bishop Cheetham of the CMS was worried Blyden might establish a “godless” university. In 1874, through a recommendation, the CMS extended its scope to the Fourah Bay Theological Seminary. Subsequently in 1876, the Fourah Bay College was affiliated with Durham University and the first university courses in West Africa commenced. Durham had a supervisory role and awarded certificates to successful candidates. Governor J. Hope Henessy of the British West Coast Administration assisted as “a means of unfettering the Negro mind” (Okafor, 1971, p. 33).

In Nigeria, the momentum of the movement reflected in the concerns of another scholar, Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe. Azikiwe’s view transcended the call for a West African university. He advocated for indigenous African universities sustained through African initiative all over the continent. He attributed most of Africa’s problems in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century to this deficiency (Azikiwe, 1937). In 1930, Nigeria established the Yaba Medical School and in 1932, other courses were established in the new Yaba Higher College. Students studied for diplomas in Science, Engineering, Survey Agriculture and Animal Health (Carr-Saunders, 1961).

In Ghana, Agbodeka (1998) posits that Achimota College, with its exquisite scenery and a library boasting of 16,000 books, had the best college library in British West Africa, and to some, in Africa. Achimota’s intention was to establish an indigenous African H.E institution of international standards. Therefore, the Gold Coast Advisory Education Committee rejected a suggestion by Governor Guggisberg that the College be linked with the University of London.

The colonial government established two Commissions, the Asquith and Elliot Commissions, to look into the prospects of university education. The former’s assignment was to explore the possibility of a H.E institution in British West Africa. It recommended the setting up of universities affiliated with the University of London. Then, in July 1945, a Labour Government

came to power and Rt. Hon. A. Creech Jones, M.P., who as a member of the Elliot Commission and who had signed the Minority Report, became Secretary of State for the Colonies. Jones changed the earlier government decision and accepted the Elliot Report that advocated the establishment of one university at Ibadan for the whole of West Africa (Ashby, 1966). A series of events led to unrest in West Africa, mainly in Sierra Leone and Gold Coast. By March 1946, these disapprovals reached the Gold Coast Legislative Council where the Ghanaian members said the agitations demonstrated people were keen to fight for a university. They were ready to spend greatly on the institution (Achimota) to realise this transformation (Legislative Council Debates Session in Agbodeka, 1998). Carr-Saunders (1961) maintains that the colonists were not sympathetic to the indigenous ambitions for H.E. The locals had “little understanding” of the function of universities in the modern world, nonetheless, in the colonies, the thought of imitating these model universities almost certainly appeared great.

There was evidence that racist assumptions were guiding the colonists – there were misgivings about the competence of non-Europeans profiting from university education. Nicolson (2005) provides the following dialogue, which occurred in Entebbe on 13 January 1937 and was captured in the diary of Harold Nicolson (a member of the De La Warr Commission, which campaigned for university colleges in sub-Saharan Africa):

After dinner last night we discussed the capacity of the African brain. Kauntze [the director of medical services] said that it has been proved by Windt that the cells of the African brain were undeveloped. What he wanted to find out was whether these cells developed in the educated African. So we must cut up a Makerere [college] student and see. (p. 171)

Back in Gold Coast (Ghana), on the proposal of Hon. C.W. Techie-Menson, a committee chaired by Kenneth Bradley, the Acting Colonial Secretary was set up to advise the Governor on issues regarding H.E. After a series of national consultations, the Bradley Committee agreed that Gold Coast should have its own university college. The committee projected the exploration of local sources to generate funds to construct it (Dowuona, cited in Agbodeka, 1998). Among the avenues to generate funds was to levy cocoa farmers (Agbodeka, 1998). Balme (cited in Agbodeka, 1998) further reports that, after a series of discussions with farmers, it was possible for the Cocoa Marketing Board (CMB) to levy and receive the agreed funds

from the cocoa farmers. The amount raised totalled approximately 897,000 pounds, which the farmers gave as their contribution.

Considering the effective preliminary works for the university college, the Bradley Committee intended to allow Achimota College to evolve into a university college affiliated with the University of London (University of London: Special Committee of the Senate on H.E in the Colonies, West Africa cited in Agbodeka, 1998). An Inter-University Council (IUC) delegation visited Ghana in December 1946 and was impressed with the progress made. They advised the Bradley Committee not to accept the London “external” degree but to hold on for a special relationship with the University of London (Inter-University Council for H.E in the Colonies Confidential Report of the Delegation to West Africa, 21 December 1946–15 January 1947 in Agbodeka, 1998).

After a series of further deliberations, the IUC submitted their report to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, recommending a new entity as the university college. Achimota College nevertheless served as its foundation and hosted the institution’s early activities until it gradually relocated to its permanent site. By March 1948, the Special Committee of the Senate amended the Draft Ordinance of the University College of the Gold Coast and by June 1948, an application was sent to the University of London to scheme a special relationship. The Draft Ordinance later passed into an Ordinance establishing the University College as an autonomous institution independent of Achimota College (University of London, cited in Agbodeka, 1998). On 11th October 1948, the University College of Gold Coast was formally opened and in 1961, by an Act of Parliament, the University College of the Gold Coast became autonomous and known as the University of Ghana (Agbodeka, 1998).

Clearly, the university, being the pinnacle of the Western formal education system, whetted the African appetite for one. While there was possibly an amalgamation of reasons for the struggle for H.E, the desire to imitate was overwhelming. Ashby (1964) avers:

Clearly the pioneers had no choice but to adopt the pattern of an English university. Equally clearly this was the pattern that the Africans themselves wanted. The African intellectual, educated in London or Cambridge or Manchester, would have been indignant at any softening of standards, any substitution of easier options, any cheapened version of H.E. So initially there was no problem of adaptation. The Africans

wanted a replica of the British university at its best; the expatriate staff had no other model to offer. (p. 22)

Ashby (1966) further discloses, “Over standards and quality of education the debate was overwhelmingly in favour of preserving the British academic heritage” (p. 236). This line of thought also reflects in Lulat’s (2003) assertion:

Initially, at least, there was very strong support in most African leadership circles (many of whom had obtained their degrees at universities abroad) of an externally-awarded degree that the university colleges facilitated. To them, an indigenous degree from the newly created colleges would have spelled inferior degrees. Even the idea of adapting the curricula was, at the beginning, resisted by Africans for fear that it meant dilution of quality and standards. (p. 604–605)

Agbodeka (1998) also offers the basis for the Western university “when the university institutions were being planned for the British colonial territories, they were regarded not only as places of learning and research but also of education of an elite” (p. 86). Agbodeka (1998) writes that, to nurture elites, the first Principal of the University College proposed a full residential system in order to produce a “cream of the crop” to serve as models in moral and social standards.

To demonstrate exclusivity, Agbodeka (1998) states that:

Recreation included games like cricket, tennis and golf...Cricket was the game that dominated the recreational activities of the staff of Achimota. Many of the expatriate staff and their wives were members of the “Dons” Cricket Club. Other cricket clubs against whom the Dons normally played were “The Pioneers”, who [were] made up mainly of black civil servants educated in Achimota, Mfantshipim or the United Kingdom, and the “Wayfarers” made up mostly of other expatriate civil servants. (p. 95)

Similarly, within the domain of recreation, Agbodeka (1998) discloses that:

A few firms which had beach huts at La (Beach) were, of course, expatriates. The Senior Common Room at Achimota also had a beach hut at La....On 6th May 1959, Mr. E.N. Omaboe of the Department of Economic went there but the caretaker said that he was instructed not to open the beach for any “black man”. It took Mr. Omaboe quite some time to get the hut open. The caretaker was not even aware that there were some African senior members at the college. (University College of Gold Coast in Agbodeka, 1998, p. 95–96)

The caretaker’s attitude highlights colonial power and the colonial prestige accorded to the highly schooled (Simmons & Dei, 2012). Nukunya (2003) sums up the disposition of the highly schooled Ghanaian who desired to sustain colonial routines:

It is worthy of note and quite instructive that, although the nationalist politicians condemned the evils of the colonial system during the struggle for independence, they were quietly admiring and coveting the powers and lifestyles of the white officials and hoped to emulate them on their departure. This became quite evident when after independence these politicians saw themselves as the inheritors of the status, roles and powers of the colonial establishment. They became paternalistic, patronising, and authoritarian, virtually conferring on themselves everything that could benefit them from the colonial system. (p. 243–244)

### **Post-Independence Era – Subsequent Developments in H.E**

The importance and indispensability of H.E was great. Fulfilling a promise made to Asantehene (Ashanti King) to build a university in Kumasi after the University of Ghana (Agbodeka, 1998), Kumasi College of Technology was set up in 1952 (Effah, 2003). Full autonomy to award its certificates came in 1962 and it became the University of Science and Technology (now Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology). Further, due to the Ten Year Development Plan outlined in 1946, the Accelerated Development Plan of 1951 and the Education Act of 1961 that designed free and compulsory primary and middle school education, the need for teachers increased significantly. This led to the establishment of the University College of Cape Coast in 1962, which was affiliated with the University of Ghana (Effah, 2003). It became the University of Cape Coast when it gained autonomy in 1971. The University for Development Studies and the University College of Education (now University



of Education) in Tamale and Winneba respectively came into being in 1992. They were set up to help address the growing demand for H.E as well as contribute to the socio-economic development of the country. By Acts of Parliament in December 2011, the University of Health and Allied Sciences and the University of Energy and Natural Resources came into being – making it nine public universities. There are an additional seven quasi-public universities. On the private university front in Ghana, there are about sixty-one private universities and university colleges (National Accreditation Board, N.D). These institutions concentrate on Business programmes with Human Resource Management and Banking and Finance dominating; the belief is that they are market-driven.

An assessment of the webpage of the National Accreditation Board discloses an association between religious institutions and private H.E in Ghana. Despite the increase in private institutions, 76% of undergraduates and 92% of postgraduate students are in public institutions, while 23% and 7.3% undergraduates and postgraduate students respectively are in private institutions (Ghana Statistical Service, 2014). In spite of the growth of universities in Ghana due to the conviction that they are fundamental to national development, Dasen and Akkari (2008) argues that social and economic development in Africa has struggled to become an outcome of formal education. The need for transformation becomes necessary.

**Table 2***Educational Attainment of Ghana's Population Above 15 Years*

Level of educational attainment	Both Sexes %	Female %	Male %	Estimates in Million		
				Both Sexes	Female	Male
Never been to school	19.7	24.3	14.6	4.4	2.8	1.6
Less than MSLC/BECE	44.6	44.7	44.5	10.0	5.2	4.7
MSLC/BECE/Vocational	20.9	19.3	22.8	4.7	2.3	2.4
Secondary/SSS/SHS and Higher	14.7	11.7	18.0	3.3	1.4	1.9
<b>Total</b>	100.0	100.0	100.0	22.3	11.7	10.6

**Source: Ghana Statistical Service (2014, p.12)**

**Key**

MSLC – Middle School Leaving Certificate (equivalent to elementary school) ended in the late 1980s in Ghana.

BECE – Basic Education Certificate Examination (examination written after Junior High School) is still in use in Ghana.

Secondary – The General Certificate of Education (GCE) Ordinary Level and Advanced Level education ended in the early 1990s in Ghana.

SSS – Senior Secondary School.

SHS – Senior High School (the current way secondary schools are termed in Ghana).

It is important to add that, Secondary, SSS, and SHS in the table refer to secondary education.

Table 2 shows that close to 20% of Ghana's adult population (19.7%) has never been to school while almost half of the adult population 44.6% are schooled less than Middle School Leaving

Certificate (MSLC) or Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE). Only 14.7% have attained secondary schooling or higher. This indicates the extremely prestigious nature of university education in Ghana. Ghana's former Executive Director, National Council for Tertiary Education, Professor Duwiejua Mahama contends H.E in Ghana is elitist because access to tertiary education as measured by a Gross Enrolment Ratio is only 12% (GNA, 2015). Similarly, the Upper-East Regional Director of Ghana Health Service, Awoonor-Williams (2013), claims that medical education in Ghana is elitist because opportunity to study it is highly restricted to a circle of people.

### **Internationalisation**

Internationalisation has gained prominence in H.E narratives globally. Knight (2004) broadly captured internationalisation as a process wherein a university connects with a different university located in a foreign country to achieve certain academic, economic, political, and cultural aims. De Wit (2010) and Knight (2004) argue internationalisation of H.E is used in a limited way usually either curriculum-related (international studies, global studies, multicultural education, intercultural education, peace education) or mobility related (study abroad, education abroad, and academic mobility).

In Ghana, it is quite difficult to conceive what internationalisation means to universities due to limited literature. However, Sawyerr (2004) reminds us that internationalisation of early universities in Ghana/Africa meant imitating European universities. In respect to the early relationship between European universities and those in African colonies, Sawyerr (2004) states:

In the colonial and early independence years, the question of the quality of the universities in Africa was hardly ever at issue as the relationships between the African institutions and metropolitan institutions helped to set and maintain “international standards,” in effect, the standards of the relevant colonial power. (p. 27)

Due to the relationships illustrated by Sawyerr (2004), staff tenure, syllabi, and examinations were administered abroad and “local institutions followed the metropolitan models faithfully” (p. 27). Sawyerr adds that colonial educational strategies were parallel across Africa and sustained into independence. African universities welcomed other foreign influences but the

British, French and Belgian effects lingered on. However, there were changes in the content of H.E in the early 1980s without tempering quality. Sawyerr's account offers a perspective on Ghanaian universities' quest to internationalise.

The University of Ghana offers some insight about the desire for internationalisation by Ghanaian universities. It constituted a committee in February 2, 2015 to undertake a review of the university's internationalisation policies. The university receives support from the International Association of Universities (IAU). The committee's report recognizes that "systems (including financing), staff experience and mobility, student experience and mobility, international research needs, teaching to international standards, and attitudes and perceptions" would help the University of Ghana to internationalise (UG, 2015). The International Association of Universities (2000) captures internationalisation as:

Preparing future leaders and citizens for a highly interdependent world, requires a H.E system where internationalization promotes cultural diversity and fosters intercultural understanding, respect, and tolerance among peoples. Such internationalization of H.E contributes to building more than economically competitive and politically powerful regional blocks; it represents a commitment to international solidarity, human security and helps to build a climate of global peace.

The committee however raised concerns of "poor attitudes and perceptions of Ghanaian students and staff towards international students and vice-versa" (University of Ghana, 2015).

## **Conclusion**

The chapter has attempted to demonstrate that prior to European invasion and establishment of Western schools, African societies and Africans had systems of education with aims, scope and techniques (pedagogical methods), which mirror the cultural patterns of society. Traditional African education begins with an outlook that invokes the belief in Supreme Being to provide guiding principles for education. Society is primary to education and pedagogical methods include apprenticeship, experiential learning, proverbs, games, and gymnastics. In Moumouni's (1968) view, the effectiveness of traditional African education was promising due to its connection with life and responded to the economic, social, spiritual and political situations of societies of pre-colonial Africa and completely developing an individual.

We have been tracing the conceptions and purposes of H.E from both African and Western perspectives. While the traditional African notions of H.E focused on nurturing character to enhance a person's humanity to serve their society, Western notions introduced through colonialism had an economic emphasis – training people for work. As the discussion demonstrated, the Western system has grown exponentially, especially over the past two decades, and continues to shape H.E in Ghana while the African notions operate on the periphery in Ghana and are seen as the duty of the home.

In the next chapter, I will describe, using my lived experiences, how the educated is constructed in Ghana. My autobiographical approach will demonstrate how the process of schooling divides society and confers colonial notions of superiority and difference to the highly schooled over those with little or no schooling.

## **Section Three: Context of the Study**

### **Chapter Five: What it Means to be Educated in Ghana – My Experience of Schooling in Ghana**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter is an account of what it means to be educated in Ghana. I employ my experiences through school to provide an insight into schooling in Ghana and how the process of education confers notions of superiority and exclusivity – attributes Principe (cited in Dei, 2006, p.3) defines as colonial. I begin my experience from primary school arguing that schooling in Ghana initiated me into imbibing Western values and ideals seen as “superior”. The school frowns on African outlooks and students were punished for speaking local languages. These outlooks were nurtured through junior and senior high school and flourished at university. Schools in Ghana are eager to confer notions of superiority, difference and exclusivity, which leads to a curriculum of European supremacy therefore suggesting that everything that matters has its origins in Europe. The effect is to demoralize and make African worldviews appear insignificant. Therefore, as per my experience, I engaged in schooling and H.E at a negative level (because they largely treated African worldviews as backwards). Schooling thus becomes a means to shed the negativity and the ability to succeed in schooling tends to grant a sense of entitlement because you are “superior” to those who have not had H.E.

I concentrate on my experience at the University of Ghana and my residence in Commonwealth Hall. I employ a subculture in Commonwealth Hall called Vandalism, which is structured on the traditional Ghanaian outlook of collectivism, to demonstrate how Ghanaian worldviews can be infused into the structure of Western education in Ghana. The Hall also exudes the importance of being organised and knowing your interests. However, university authorities frowned on Vandalism due to its occasional excesses in the cause for the greater good of students. I offer some history of the Hall to demonstrate how a conscious effort was made in the early days to imbue selfless attributes to residents of Commonwealth Hall. If Ghanaian universities are the conscience of society, then Commonwealth Hall is a bastion of that conscience.

Having navigated the full trajectory of schooling in Ghana, my experiences grant a suitable framework for this discussion. This autobiographic approach locates me in the study and indicates how I get my privilege as a highly schooled individual. This approach also helps shed light on Vandalism, a phenomenon that is largely misunderstood, hence my attempt to illustrate its deeper meaning and how it tends to help nurture the values of altruism and community in occupants of the Hall. Furthermore, Vandalism blends a traditional African outlook of communalism and practices into a Western structure of H.E.

The chapter seeks to convey how the notions of education and the highly schooled display characteristics of the colonial legacy (a sense of superiority, difference and exclusivity). H.E built on a bedrock of Western values has become the sole determinant of education, the highly schooled, and the measure of the scale of a person's education, which thus results in the immense craving for Western values. This account will hopefully resonate with the experiences of many Ghanaians/Africans though the extent and outlook may differ.

### **Initial Encounter with the School (Late 1980s to Early 1990s)**

I commenced primary school at age six (year one) and completed it at twelve (year six) at a private institution in Accra, Ghana. Although not the most prestigious of schools, it was a privileged school in the locality. Shedding light on private schooling in Ghana, Sawyerr (2004) explains that the huge deficit in access created by the colonial heritage necessitated an expansion in education facilities post-independence. However, the financial burden of resourcing these institutions caused successive governments to relinquish their responsibilities. The increasing demand for schooling compelled private participation, significantly changing the schooling landscape.

Typically, private schools in Ghana had European names and were “preparatory or international” schools to bestow an aura of esteem. In contrast, public schools were primary schools, as were most mission schools. Private schools labelled their years of progression (grades) as stages, so it was stage one to six, while public schools were primary one to six. While these classifications may seem harmless, it subtly began the ascription of notions of superiority and inferiority. Invariably, students in private schools assumed notions of “superiority” due to a confluence of factors: high economic backgrounds, greater exposure to the world, finer educational facilities and better final examination results.

I quickly learned that academic successes would bestow on me the best in society and those who “struggled” academically were undeserving of a good life. It was common to hear teachers say, “You’ll suffer in life if you don’t take your studies seriously” – the teachers were reiterating social realities. Although the battle against “inferiority” or for “superiority” did not develop into a notable hateful conflict between students, in time, it aggregates to stratify society and an uneasy co-existence appears.

I faced my own challenges in the private school journey. Despite the cultural and spiritual significance of indigenous names, peers mocked me for not having a European name. Although my school was a Ghanaian-owned school, there was an unremitting goal to Westernise/Europeanise us. While there were sanctions for speaking local languages, foreign materials were preferred in education activities and it was successful because the school curriculum was alien. Wane (2009), writing on Kenya, says: “There was very little regard for my background, my values, or my history, as the Catholic nuns tried to implement a European curriculum” (p. 160). At the end of my sixth year (age twelve), I proceeded to Junior Secondary School.

### **Teenage Years at Junior Secondary School (Early 1990s)**

I had my Junior Secondary School education at the same institution for three years. The focus was identical to primary school. We learnt about summer and winter, longer days and shorter nights and the reverse, though these concepts were foreign to Ghana. Wane (2009) writes:

I can still recall the White nuns’ mantra as they made us memorize European or American history, geography, economics, or sing “London Bridge Is Falling Down,” or perform Irish dances every Sunday afternoon. (p. 160)

The “foreign touch” was the reason our parents were paying exorbitant fees in private schools so we were punished for not comprehending abstract teachings. Students who failed exams repeated class or were dismissed for successive poor performances.

Ghana revised the General Certificate of Education (GCE) Ordinary and Advanced levels to Junior Secondary School (JSS) and Senior Secondary School (SSS) modes in 1987. The expectation was for students to acquire some technical and vocational education in JSS in order



to progress into similar tracts in SSS if desired. According to Dzobo in Akyeampong (2008), in 1967 the Kwapong Committee, tasked to look into ways of improving education in Ghana, recommended a ten year elementary education. In the eighth year, suitable candidates would go to secondary schools and those not selected would progress to complete the remaining two years in pre-vocational education. However, the concept of continuation schools possibly devalued the authority of vocational and technical education because it admitted those who “failed” to progress to secondary schools. After a while, these pre-vocational schools were condemned for providing substandard education for the masses while the secondary school remained the preserve for children from prominent homes. The perception that schooling should not lead to technical or vocational occupations has a long history in Ghana. As a result, some private JSS did not provide workshops required for practical lessons. Similarly, some parents placed their children in schools without these technical facilities.

Schooling was therefore a process of building walls among people and the notions of superiority subtly set in motion were strengthened due to the generally better performance of students from private schools in Basic Education Certificate Examination at the end of JSS. To Wane (2009), “What my teachers and my parents did not realize was that seeds of dissonance had been planted in me during the early years of my education” (p. 160). These seeds of dissonance followed us and manifested in a conflict of voices. For instance, society teaches that “a good name is better than riches”, but in school, it was competition to become a “big man” (a position of power, status and affluence). The best students were those who could cram texts and some of us devised legitimate means to pass exams. I passed the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) in 1995 to enter senior secondary school.

### **My Secondary School Experience (Late 1990s)**

I spent three years in Senior Secondary School (1996–1998, aged 16–18) and the experience was parallel to my earlier experiences in many regards. The main contrast was its boarding setup, which came with its own atmosphere and culture. The boarding school experience in Ghana was akin to a typical military institution – the mantra was to obey before complain. There was an adherence to the Europeanization agenda though my school endeavoured to assimilate us into African ways through Ghanaian arts. School authorities were liberal on local languages though senior students could punish a junior for speaking them. School mottos in

Latin or English were prestigious even though many schools also bore mottos in local languages.

It is worth mentioning that most of the renowned secondary schools in Ghana are government schools (public schools) and admission into them guarantee entry into university. As Addae-Mensah (2000) reveals, the majority of students admitted into universities in Ghana come from the top 100 senior secondary schools. The desire to enter these top schools explains the reason why people pay exorbitant fees at JSS levels. Sawyerr (2004) says, “The payment of high school fees in the private schools and a variety of other charges even in the public system constitute a screen for entry into the better secondary schools” (p. 24). Commenting on how the interplay of economic and social status sustain better opportunities, Sawyerr (2004) remarks that “...as the children of privilege go to the better schools in the advantaged areas, the trend toward reinforcing privilege from generation to generation is set” (p. 24). According to the Ghana Statistical Service (2014), 18.6% of students in JSS are in private schools, this illustrates the exclusivity. I passed my Senior Secondary School Certificate Examinations (SSSCE) and gained admission into university in 2000.

### **At the “Citadel of Knowledge”**

It was both a personal and socially conferred privilege to be in Ghana’s premier university owing to the opportunity to immerse in an environment showered with awe, immense aura and profound shine. Another factor was the premium on admissions. According to Atuahene and Owusu-Ansah (2013), in 2011 the University of Ghana admitted only 52% of applicants. The university puts the figure in 2016 at 62% (Ghana News Agency, 2016).

### **The Academic Environment**

Many aspects of universities that I had held in high regard deserted me upon becoming a university student. The university was not the space for contentious and academically stimulating debates in lecture theatres but only informally amongst peers. The orientation was to pass exams and attain a certificate. University was the apex of our Westernisation, especially in content. As a student of Sociology, Political Science, Classical History and Civilisations and Philosophy, courses predominantly had their origins in Europe and Ancient Greece. Africa was usually an object of study with a primitive past and problematic present. The university was a

European institution in an African space. While freedom seemed to abound, power relations were highly asymmetrical and expressed subtly and blatantly usually against students despite there being pleasant academics. Students were blank slates and barely permitted to form thoughts based on realities. We had to be loyal to a lecturer's perspectives or obtain bad grades in exams. A lecturer once said, "Just give me back my notes."

### **Power Play**

To confront these asymmetrical power relations comes with victimisation and threats. There was a gap in lecturer–students relationships largely because students felt intimidated. In other instances, student numbers were too large. Nevertheless, students were hardly partners in scholarship and the wellbeing of lecturers and senior members largely outweighed that of students.

### **Catch Me if You Can!**

The most scrutinised, intense and frenzied moment was the period of examinations because H.E in Ghana is very examination-centred. Although examinations were barely practical, some lecturers encouraged critical and creative thinking. The circumstances that surrounded examination was a paradox – I call it *catch me if you can!* Cheating was highly detested and severely penalised. However, I find it strange that no institution consciously attempted to imbue ethical values against that act. Instead, emphasis was laid on measures to accost people who attempted to cheat. Therefore, significant resources went into policing examinations; it was common at a point to see closed circuit television (CCTV) cameras installed at examination centres. Some students also devised appropriate methods to outwit such systems so the chase went on!

## Commonwealth Hall, Vandals, and Vandalism

Picture taken by the researcher



**Picture 4**

*The Signpost of Commonwealth Hall*

Simmons and Dei (2012) conceptualise colonialism as imposition and domination. Principe (cited in Dei, 2006, p.3) sees activities that “reinforce the exclusive notions of belonging, difference and superiority” as colonial. In this chapter, I have been discussing how my schooling experience in Ghana sought to confer colonial notions of exclusivity, difference and superiority over those with little or no schooling. However, a period in my schooling experience that had a tremendous effect on me was my residence in Commonwealth Hall at the University of Ghana (2000–2004). During that period, I experienced notions of exclusivity, difference and superiority conferred through Western ideals of schooling being confronted. The privilege of being university students was not lost on us; however, the culture of the Hall was to utilise our privilege for the common good of students in the Hall, the university and

Ghana as a whole. This was reflected in a variety of ways. For instance, Commonwealth Hall was the place to find the cheapest food and other items on campus. There was a conscious attempt to treat members as equals irrespective of their religious, social and economic background. To drum into us the need to live simple and ordinary lives, in the early weeks, we were told of an account in the late-1990s, where members of the Hall turned against another member who was contesting a Students Representative Council position for saying that he was not an ordinary student, because he worked in the media and had connections. The members of the Hall said they wanted an ordinary student to lead them. This was the nature of Commonwealth Hall. Commonwealth Hall honoured things that the university did not honour; for instance, the Hall honoured communalism instead of individualism, traditional African spiritual systems instead of Christianity, activism instead of passivity. The Hall and university seemed to be advancing competing worldviews; the Hall tilted towards African worldviews while the university skewed towards Europe.

There was room for people to practice different faiths and hold different worldviews but the interest of the Hall and its students was always supreme. These interests were reached either by consensus or through voting. The Hall therefore appeared subversive in the eyes of some university authorities. The public image of the Hall was also a mixed bag – unpleasant to some and commendable to others. There were genuine concerns due to some extreme excesses on the part of students in our quest to push a cause. Personally, my family relations who worked in the university rejected my idea to choose Commonwealth Hall. In the words of one of my relatives, “It is a Hall for riff-raff”. He wanted me to choose a Hall that was passive, laidback and “gentle” and at the time noted for arguably hosting students from rich homes. Somehow, at the last minute, I was allowed to choose Commonwealth Hall. The unfriendly relationship between the university and the Hall led to an attempt by the university in 2010 to alter the composition of the Hall from all-male undergraduate to a postgraduate mixed gender Hall to curtail some unacceptable behaviour from students. The students took the case to Ghana’s High Court, and with alumni of the Hall offering legal assistance, the Court stopped the university’s intentions.

I employ my experience in Commonwealth Hall to explain how the culture of the Hall sought to imbue the need for the common good, acting in unity and with one voice, and transcending personal and social privileges to treat people as humans. This was a different experience throughout my school experience. The alumni of the Hall, Old Vandals Association (OVA),

have adopted a blind people's home, and also offer yearly medical outreach and screening programmes in deprived communities in Ghana. The values and themes that are encapsulated within my experience in Commonwealth Hall emerge later in the thesis in the voices of some respondents. I utilise the works of some prominent alumni of Commonwealth Hall (Dr. Kobina Arthur-Kennedy and Dr. Ekow Spio-Garbrah) and American folklorist, Vlach (1971) to support my accounts of Commonwealth Hall. I also draw on the historical genealogy and core principles of the concept arising from the Commonwealth Hall (Vandal) experience known as Vandalism. As Vlach (1971) points out, "the origin of the ominous name is founded in local circumstances and not borrowed from expatriate Europeans as it would appear" (p. 33). My intention is not to be critical of Vandalism but to provide a balanced view of the concept, highlighting its strengths, especially how it seeks to promote the common good. Commonwealth Hall was a testament to the tolerance and inclusivity of the liberal university. Furthermore, my autobiographic account is also an attempt to help minimise the preconceptions against Commonwealth Hall and Vandalism (Ellis et al., 2011).

### **Who Are These People!**

Writing on the composition of Commonwealth Hall in the 1970s, Spio-Garbrah (2010), a former C.E.O of the Commonwealth Telecommunications Organisation (CTO) (2003–2011) and Diplomat and Politician, states that students allocated to Commonwealth Hall cut across different social backgrounds. They exhibited diverse behaviours yet coexisted peacefully. There were extremely religious people, "pure course men" and others who resided in the Hall because of affiliation. These dynamics had not changed when I got into residence. It is a male Hall and best described as *unity in diversity* due to the willingness to act in unison despite the different religious, socio-economic and behavioural traits of residents. According to Spio-Garbrah (2010), university officials disclosed that in the late 1960s through the 1970s, the majority of male applicants preferred Commonwealth Hall, which seems to indicate that the values of the Hall sat well with prospective students. However, the lack of available rooms put allocation at a premium; it was a first come, first serve basis. The situation was worse during my era due to extremely limited spaces in the Hall.

## Structures

Commonwealth Hall differed from other Halls at the University of Ghana. It seemed lawless yet well-structured and largely orderly. Commonwealth Hall, like other Halls, operated within the ambit of Junior and Senior Common Rooms (JCR and SCR). However, there was a parallel system of governance based on Ghanaian chieftaincy structures. There was a Chief Vandal (overall leader), Chief Priest (performed spiritual functions), Divine Drummer and Chief Choir Master who led regular drumming and singing respectively – Vandals call it charging. We had a Commander of the Vandal Militia and other members of the chieftaincy outfit. The highest authority rested in the chieftaincy outfit and they collaborated with the JCR executives to advance the interest of the Hall. Residents grant authority to the chieftaincy outfit to reprimand students who broke laws. For instance, the university recommends dismissal for stealing; however, in Commonwealth Hall, an offender was paraded through the principal streets of the university and ponded (an act akin to water baptism) to purge them of the misdemeanour. The reason behind the rather embarrassing option is to enable the offender to continue his studies. I hasten to add that an offender was allowed to choose his preferred means of punishment. Even though Vandals revere the chieftaincy outfit, the university authorities only recognise the JCR executives as the rightful leaders of the Hall.



**Picture taken by the researcher**



**Picture 5**

*Front View of Commonwealth Hall*

## **Vandalism**

Vandalism as a subculture started in Commonwealth Hall in the late 1950s. Agbodeka (1998) says, “Before 1960, a group of students in Commonwealth Hall begun calling themselves Vandals” (p. 254). Offering a detailed account, Vlach (1971), an American folklorist, notes that Commonwealth Hall students were youthful so older students in the other Halls regarded them as immature and irresponsible. Activities like drinking sprees and loud revelry agitated the older students who were more engaged in their studies. Capturing the birth of the name Vandal, Vlach discloses that an older student, venting his fury on some rowdy Commonwealth students, said “Quiet, you Vandals” (p. 34). That historic juncture marked the inception of Vandals at the University of Ghana. With fondness, the students embraced the name and proclaimed it with great enthusiasm, further proof that words could not deter Vandals. Vlach (1971) therefore proclaims:



Vandalism is the spirit that dwells in Vandal City (Commonwealth Hall) alone and infuses courage and fearlessness into the citizens here within. Vandalism is the secular spirit of oneness, brotherliness, selflessness and devotedness that gives a common identity to all the sons of the Great Father. It is the same spirit that makes watch dogs of human liberty and provides the yardstick for dignity. (p. 34)

Agbodeka (1998) concisely asserts, “Vandals love their Hall” (p. 254). The word “VANDAL” has metamorphosed into an acronym: Vivacious, Altruistic, Neighbourly, Dedicated, Affable and Loyal as illustrated in Image 1: the signpost of Commonwealth Hall.

**Picture taken by the researcher**



**Picture 6**

*The Crest of Commonwealth Hall*

## **Early Origins**

As early as in 1961, Jones Ofori-Atta, one of the original Vandals in the 1950s who went on to become a Ministerial Secretary of the Ministry of Economic Development in the 1960s, expressed the need for a formation of a “Vandal Cabinet” since Vandalism was waning. The group decided to offer Vandalism a philosophical foundation on which students could devote their energies. They critically examined the beliefs of Vandalism based on the Hall’s history. Bacchus, the ancient Greek god of wine, was chosen as a mythical symbol based on Bacchus’ international recognition, and authorisation to drink alcohol. Father Bacchus, as Vandals call him, became the god of Vandals and watches over his “sons” (since it is a male Hall) and prayed to for successes in Vandal endeavours, be it academic, athletic, or sexual. There are minor deities who watch over the kitchen, the library, and the porter’s lodge (Vlach, 1971).

Picture taken by the researcher



**Picture 7**

*The Bust of Bacchus Engraved in the Mid-Section of the Vandal City*

Vlach continues to write:

Having its own particular initiation rites, a pantheon of “hall deities” and a large repertory of double-meaning terms, Commonwealth Hall has provided an example and an inspiration for the four other residence halls at Legon. A visitor to Commonwealth



Hall is soon informed that he has entered the “Realm of the Vandals,” and he learns to refer to Commonwealth Hall as “Vandal City.” (p. 33)

**Picture taken by the researcher**



**Picture 8**

*A View of a Section (Lower Terrace) of Commonwealth Hall*

### **Core Principles of Vandalism**

Vandalism revolves around fairness, a strong sense of community and a common sense of purpose for agency towards the common good. Vlach (1971) mentions an editorial on Vandalism in the Commonwealth Hall newspaper, *The Echo* (29, no. 4, 6 December 1969, p. 2), where Vandalism was presented in terms such as “secular spirit”, “force”, “power”, “light”, and “grace”. However, to Vlach, “Vandalism has as its objectives unity and action. By having these qualities the hall organization can effectively achieve renown in campus affairs and further the prestige of Vandal City” (p. 34). Similarly, Spio-Garbrah (2010) states the key principles that distinguish a true Vandal are idealism, high self-expectation, unity and solidarity. Others are the search for excellence, creativity, tolerance, openness, a belief in

fairness and justice, and willingness fight for a cause. A passionate desire to defend the truth in adherence to the Hall motto “Truth Stands” guides all activities. As Vlach (1971) observes:

Vandals would persevere in their habitual disturbances and still succeed academically to demonstrate their “Vandal vitality.” Hence, the Vandal historian reports that the alcoholic heights of the early Vandals were equalled by their performances on the crucial first university examination. Also they distinguished themselves by their active participation in campus government, sports, and extracurricular events. Thus, the term Vandal became prestigious and is still an honourable distinction. The concept of being a Vandal was crystallized into a philosophy known quite appropriately as “Vandalism.” This system of “Vandal thought” has developed over the last ten years into a complex of ideas which eludes exact description. (p. 34)

### **The Image of Vandalism: A Love–Hate Situation**

As indicated earlier, Commonwealth Hall and Vandalism have been associated with misconduct due to the occasional taunts, vulgarism, demonstrations and anti-establishment stances. Some people are not aware that these sometimes visible aspects of Vandal behaviour are not the core principles of Vandalism. Agbodeka (1998) underlines these occasional transgressions:

After the early 1960s other activities like performances of traditional religious rites, Bacchus worship, profane singing, violent behaviour, odd behaviour (for example, members of the Hall running away with the football from the field whenever their team is losing a football match) crept in an [*sic*] have now made the movement controversial. (p. 254)

Some alumni of the Hall duly acknowledge the occasional excesses of Vandalism. Spio-Garbrah (2010), writing against the University of Ghana’s decision to change the status of Commonwealth Hall due to offensive behaviour, states that:

There would be periodic excesses in student behaviour anywhere in the world is to be expected. However, when such excesses occur, authorities have to be clear whether their policy is to identify the few students who may be responsible, for them to be

counselled, cautioned or sanctioned, or whether a whole Hall and its long and rich traditions of idealism, high expectations, search for excellence, creativity, spirit of tolerance, openness in diversity, a belief in fairness and justice, and defence of the truth, should be sacrificed.

Spio-Garbrah (2010) continues:

Such wild celebrations as took place on Vandals Day pale into insignificance when compared to the debauchery that occurs in Florida amongst millions of U.S. university students during the annual Spring Break, or when compared with similar student springfests in the U.K.'s Brighton and Southampton beaches, the beer festivals in Germany, or the public marijuana smokeblasts in Amsterdam. All over the world, university students seem to have various ways of relieving the pressure of high-tension studies, and Ghana has been no different.

Similarly, in an online article another Vandal, Arthur-Kennedy (2010) (a Ghanaian physician and politician), admits that Commonwealth Hall has led peaceful and sometimes not-so-peaceful demonstrations against democrats and tyrants alike. In his words, “indeed, sometimes, the heckling perpetuated may be inappropriate.”

Notwithstanding, Agbodeka acknowledges that “the group [*Vandals*] was noted for taking initiative in activities on campus including voluntary services such as garbage disposal and other sanitation work; often they also defended students’ rights as members of National Union of Ghana Students (NUGS) won’t do” (p. 254). However, the bad press leads to different public conceptions of Vandalism. Spio-Garbrah (2010) thus indicates that, “The whole concept, philosophy, and practice of Vandalism has often been misrepresented or abased.”

## Personal picture



**Picture 9**

*A Group of Vandals Fancifully Dressed as Part of Hall Week Celebrations*

### **Confronting the Colonial – Overthrow of “Acapompo”**

Spio-Garbrah (2010) says Commonwealth Hall was the first to rebel in 1972 against a phenomenon on university campuses known as “academic pomposity” (acapompo). This is an unusual tradition that required students (Junior Members) to dress in Western formal attire and university gowns for midweek dinner. Senior Members sat on a high table, sipped expensive imported wines drawn from a basement cellar full of such wines. Colourfully clad waiters in waistcoats went about serving both senior and junior members. However, in an act of noncompliance in 1972, Vandals overthrew this colonial system by breaking into the wine cellar and spirited away the vestiges of the class system. It is worth highlighting that this form of socialisation tends to contribute towards the inculcation of colonial notions of exclusivity, superiority and difference. Predictably, this act did not sit well with the Senior Members and a protracted frosty confrontation between students and the Senior Members ensued. There were attempts to suspend or dismiss some students but it took the Old Vandals Association (the

alumni of the Hall) to intervene, calm tempers, and restore normalcy. Even though I did not experience the “acapompo” in Commonwealth Hall, we inherited the culture of resistance. For instance, we resisted astronomical increases in academic and residential facility user fees on the grounds of prevailing economic conditions not because a few could pay.

### **Leadership and Selflessness**

The enthusiastic periods of patriotism in Ghana, in the 1970s, witnessed Vandals spearheading university students to initiate various “Yentua” (*we shall not pay*) demonstrations around the country to support the government in its tough stance against some international creditors who had conspired with the Progress Party government to pile debts on Ghana. Vandals again led university students’ demonstrations in 1973 to support the establishment of Ghana’s National Service Scheme (a policy that requires graduates of public tertiary institutions to serve the country for the state’s contribution towards their education). Similarly, Vandals volunteered to lift cocoa beans from the hinterlands to ensure Ghana’s economic survival during the Provisional National Defence Council (PNDC) (military regime) era under Chairman Rawlings in the early 1980s (Spio-Garbrah, 2010).

Arthur-Kennedy (2010) writes that Commonwealth Hall was the place where the night after J. B. Danquah (one of founding fathers of Ghana) died in prison in 1965, a student stood up to honour Danquah and was hauled off to prison. The Hall led the celebrated “Alutas” (demonstrations) against Acheampong’s (a military Head of State in the 1970s) dictatorship. Again, the Hall produced a young doctor who assisted Gbedemah (an early politician and a minister of state) when he was injured at a rally against the Union Government in Kumasi (a town in Ghana) in 1978. That young doctor, Kwabena Frimpong Boateng, is now a Professor and renowned cardiothoracic surgeon. In the 1980s, the Hall steered demonstrations against Rawlings’ (former Ghana President 1981–2000) dictatorship. In Arthur-Kennedy’s view, if universities have been the conscience of the nation, Halls like Commonwealth have been the backbone of that conscience.

Similarly on leadership by Vandals, Vlach (1971) recounts how Vandals fought on behalf of Mensah Sarbah Hall after the university administration decided to expel the staff of the Hall’s newspaper, *The Siren*, for posting an “obscene” cartoon. These are values of selflessness Commonwealth Hall attempts to infuse in students. During my stay, we regularly engaged in



clean-up exercises in different parts of Accra (Ghana's capital) and hospitals. We were ready to volunteer towards acts likely to improve lives of the underprivileged and vulnerable, and participated in medical and other outreach programmes of the alumni.

### **General Impact of Commonwealth Hall on the University of Ghana**

Commonwealth Hall's impact on the life and existence of the University of Ghana is noteworthy. Vlach (1971) states that:

Although some universities have been known to labour for many years to develop a sense of tradition, the waiting period for the University of Ghana has indeed been brief. Inaugurated in 1948 as the University College of the Gold Coast at Legon, a suburb of Accra, this African university now possesses traditional practices which are vigorously followed by the student body. One residence hall, Commonwealth, which was opened as recently as 1958, is largely responsible for the wealth of folklore found on campus. (p. 33)

### **The Way Forward**

According to Spio-Garbrah (2010), Vandalism is a mindset, a set of values, a spirit that yearns for self-discovery, for excellence, achievement, and is highly resilient. Another Old Vandal, Daasebre Oti Boateng, Omanhene (Paramount King) of New Juaben Traditional Area and President of the Eastern Regional House of Chiefs and former government statistician, contends Vandalism is not destructive but collectivist. Daasebre urges university authorities to be at peace with the Hall for the development of the University (GNA, 2010). To Spio-Garbrah (2010), development can be harnessed by connecting and tapping into the international network of Old Vandals. Moreover, it is important to realise that Vandalism is also a fount of knowledge, experience, finance and contacts for the possible renewal of the Hall, university and country.

Even though Agbodeka (1998) finds problems with "activities like performances of Traditional religious rites" (p. 254), it should not be the case. Traditional African practice like pouring libation is neither evil nor backwards. It is my contention that harnessing and promoting Vandalism as a subculture would put an enormous sense of responsibility on Vandals.

Commonwealth Hall's successes lay in sustaining tradition and fostering unity, loyalty and courage in adversity for the common good. Vlach (1971) recognises this unique leadership trait:

Commonwealth Hall has provided the University of Ghana with a set of traditions and given the students a stereotype of honour and prestige to support. In times of campus turmoil, for example the October Revolution of 1968, Legon's students looked to Vandals for leadership. In fact, they will readily admit that were it not for the Vandals' presence there would have been no confrontation at all. Hence, the University of Ghana administrators, like their counterparts in American universities, learned that unity and initiative, though desirable, can be explosive. (p. 43)

Picture taken by the researcher



**Picture 10**

*Former President of Ghana, John Mahama (2010–2017) an Old Vandal at the Annual Old Vandals Jamboree (2009) [then as Vice President of Ghana]*

Concluding his research, Vlach (1971) proclaims that:

Commonwealth students in thirteen years have welded together a structure of ritual that instils pride and incentive into an otherwise bland campus life. For the folklorist and social scientist, the special blend of “rewarmed” classical mythology, local African ritual and language, an argot based on mock-seriously extended metaphors, and blatant but essentially naive obscenity all combined in the service of student solidarity, has its significance in that it is both new and familiar. Mock ceremonies, revived deities, arcane titles, secret languages, and outrageous behaviour in support of a serious set of convictions have been student activities at least since the Middle Ages. But to find them in a new African university, never (as far as could be discovered) consciously introduced or fostered, suggests that university students constantly reinterpret and localize widely held traditional forms. The Ghanaian version, far removed from a Rag Day at Oxford or an American fraternity “R.F.,” shows how an essentially borrowed institution takes its roots and thrives in fertile ground. (p. 43–44)

In spite of the negativity that surrounds Commonwealth Hall, which informed my family’s opposition to reside there, my stay there exposed me to other aspects of life and education (socialisation) absent in mainstream schooling. The fears held by family members were not out of place, Vandals sometimes went overboard. What Vandalism taught me was to be “ordinary”, to find pride in African culture – they reflected in the activities of the Hall. Commonwealth Hall was not a place where the sense of superiority, difference and exclusivity, as a consequence of our schooling, were privileged. I think this should be the aspiration of any institution attempting to nurture selfless leaders. Students should be empowered and guided in their activities in order to form judgement, make mistakes and learn from their mistakes. I do not speak of Vandalism in a sense of purity; I advocate for it with realism. Vandalism is interspersed with the good, the bad and the ugly. We should celebrate and encourage its successes whilst we attempt to redress the challenges and shortfalls. These are common issues of humanity. The occasional excesses of Vandalism should not generate hatred for positive energy with the potential for excellent leadership and social development of the country.

Vandals are altruistic people, not hooligans. Vandalism may be radical but not destructive, albeit some acts tend to be destructive. It takes Vlach, a foreigner, to appreciate Ghanaian culture imbued in Vandalism and its contribution towards the development of the university.

Vlach (1971) argues that “unity and identity based on extensive tradition is not a bond that can easily be destroyed” (p. 43).

### **Summarising the Schooling Process**

My schooling process was a mixed bag. Even though education orbits around knowledge, skills and attitudes, I contend that central to the art of education is the transfer of accepted values. As indicated in Chapter Four, the traditional African ethos emphasised the nurturing of worthy character. However, the values the schooling process sought to transfer were not quite explicit. A prominent focus was to train us to pass exams ethically, so the schooled can be equated to an examination passing machine. The greatest disservice of the schooling process to me was the lack of knowledge of Self. Although I did not feel inferior, I believed Europeans created many of the things in the world. I joined the “what’s wrong with the black man” bandwagon and looked to Europe for “inspiration”. Despite the tensions, anxieties and confusions, there were good memories – the informal interactions were great. The university granted enormous social, political and potential economic capital. I gained numeracy and communication skills in the English language and the university particularly opened up the world to me. Nyamnjoh (2012) summarises colonial education by arguing that it “was meant to provide colonialism with the local support staff it needed to achieve its hegemonic imperialist purpose” (p.7).

Overall, the benefits of H.E in Ghana are personal and consistent with the individualistic orientation of Western ideals. H.E “elevates” us above society through the belief that we have escaped the trappings of indigeneity (being African) and thus develop a high sense of entitlement. My most meaningful values came from the home and society. Residing in Commonwealth Hall took me through the school of life – it offered human ethics, bravery, the essence of social justice, the need for social cohesion, and the strength in synergy. The Hall equipped me with relevant knowledge, skills and appropriate attitudes required to transit and survive different paths of life.

### **What it Means to be Educated in Ghana: Preserving the Colonial Heritage**

The accounts from primary school to university illustrate the educated person in Ghana. The “educated person” in Ghana is one who has been to school, acquired academic certificates, and shuns or appear to shun African traditions and culture for more “worthy” ones. Education

operates to confer notions of superiority and difference and stratifies society. Even though the associated privileges may be waning, largely, due to the scarcity of employment opportunities, H.E remains a springboard. The worth of education is measured by academic qualifications and prospects of securing a job. The essence and substance of education to society is largely secondary.

### **Knowledge**

The knowledge base to identify the educated in Ghana is foreign, that is, European/Western, and mainly English or French. The highly schooled tend to know and discuss more of Europe/West than our societies.

### **Attitude(s)**

The highly schooled has taste, desire or obsession for things European (clothes, food, accents, perspectives). The school un/consciously teaches us to demean Africanness due to the knowledge and realities it bestows. We end up being both victims and apologists of European worldviews and there is visible self-hate that is manifested through anti-Africa/anti-black activities and behaviours.

### **Skills**

Although the focus was to “educate” us for work, many of us who studied social science courses did not acquire any hard skills and no conscious efforts went into developing our soft skills. However, despite the odd cases, the outlook was not to improve traditional ways but to adopt and adapt foreign techniques.

Therefore, the highly schooled in Ghana is a person who exudes European outlooks, speaks a European language and possesses an academic qualification(s). The association between education and specific occupations creates the expectation of the highly schooled to work in a corporate environment, dress in a certain manner and not perform “dirty jobs”. Despite the conception of schooling as education, education “...is a lot broader and deeper than schooling, and that its primary purpose is intergenerational transmission of cultural heritage” (Obanya, 2011, p. xxv).

I contend against a notion in Ghana that some people are “uneducated”. This is a misconception because education operates within acquisition, enhancement, and/or dissemination of knowledge, skills and attitudes, usually within a cultural space to enable people to function well in their society. Per these tenets, it is difficult to classify a person as “uneducated”. However, owing to issues relating to power, prestige and privilege, whose origins are due to Ghana’s colonial heritage, the schooled erroneously tend to make schooling the sole determinant of education and the educated. According to Ekeh (1975), the historical basis of this worldview lies in colonialism where the European colonist distinguished between schooled and unschooled Africans: “Africans who were ‘Western’ educated...mattered in the colonial situations in Africa” and “were sharply differentiated from the ‘natives’ on the principle that the former were those of the ‘Europeanized’ present and the natives belonged to the backward past” (p. 97).

## **Conclusion**

We have been looking at what it means to be educated in Ghana. Using my experiences through school, I have attempted to demonstrate how the educated are conceived in Ghana. The onset of schooling begins the subtle hierarchical arrangement of people depending on the type of school (public or private) an individual attends and the extent to which a person traverses the path of schooling to its apex. The university extends the notions of being highly schooled and possessing attributions of superiority and exclusivity. Therefore, a subculture like Vandalism that seeks to infuse an African notion of community and collectivism is frowned upon because its tenets are not sophisticated enough. I have illustrated how the schooling process systematically blinds us from local realities and attempts to be ordinary and adopt traditional African ways of life are quite unpopular. Therefore, the highly schooled must exude knowledge of Europe and exhibit attitudes that reflect European phenomena. The H.E process tends to sustain the colonial structures of privilege and alienation of the African Self. Through traits deemed “superior” the highly schooled display their sense of exclusivity and difference from larger society.

The next chapter begins Section Four, a four-chapter presentation of the empirical aspects of the study. Chapter Six specifically presents an analysis and discussion of how elitist H.E is in Ghana.

## Section Four: Empirical Aspects of the Study

### Chapter Six: How Elitist is H.E in Ghana?

#### Introduction

This chapter presents an analysis and discussion of field data. The main question this chapter focuses on is: “How elitist is H.E in Ghana?” Notions of elitism are common in Ghana’s H.E. For example, Nkrumah (1973c), Ghana’s first President, accused the University of Ghana of elitism. Even though his accusation was debunked by the university (this is discussed in detail in Chapter Eleven), the claim of elitism still permeates discussions on Ghanaian universities. Despite these claims, what constitutes elitism is vague and hardly conceptualised in Ghana. As indicated in Chapter Four, Ghana’s former Executive Director of the National Council for Tertiary Education, Professor Duwiejua Mahama, accuses Ghanaian universities of elitism based on their admissions (GNA, 2015). Similarly, the Upper-East Regional Director of Ghana Health Service, Awoonor-Williams (2013) also indicts the Ghana Medical Council of elitism because the study of medicine has become a preserve of a select few. Both Mahama and Awoonor-Williams’s notions pertain to access. However, I felt there should be deeper local meanings. As a result, I requested my respondents to conceptualise elitism before finding out how elitist universities are in Ghana. Their conceptualisations are unintended findings of the study – a surprise.

As indicated in Chapter Three, I had a proxy who helped me to find respondents for the study. Table 3 captures the respondents’ status and the pseudonyms I employed in the analysis. All the respondents had worked or are still working in Ghanaian public (state owned) universities.



<b>Respondent</b>	<b>Pseudonym</b>
A Traditional Ruler and a Professor	King
Former Registrar	Registrar
Former Pro-Vice Chancellor	ProVC
Council Chair of a University	Council-Chair
Senior Lecturer and Christian Priest	Reverend
Lecturer	Theatre
Former Director (Dean)	Educator
Senior Lecturer 1	Change-Agent
Lecturer 2	Pan-Africanist

**Table 3**

*Pseudonyms for the Respondents*

Explaining Table 3, King is a Professor in a Ghanaian university and happens to be a Paramount Chief in one of Ghana’s ten regions. A Paramount Chief is a position for the highest level political, spiritual and cultural leader in traditional Ghanaian ethnic, regional or local polity.

Ghanaian public universities have a common leadership structure. The principal officers in an order of hierarchy are: the Chancellor (usually appointed by government), the Chairman of the University Council (appointed by government) and the Vice Chancellor (appointed by the University Council in consultation with government). Other officers who make up university leadership are: the Pro-Vice Chancellor and Registrar (who are also appointed by the University Council). In Ghanaian universities, the highest academic position is a Professor, followed by the Associate Professor, Senior Lecturer, Lecturer and Assistant Lecturer.

I wish to state the respondents offered their opinions freely irrespective of their status. As we will see in the analysis chapters, the youngest respondents and lowest in rank among the respondents (Pan-Africanist) offered the most radical and political views on the questions posed. All of the respondents were willing for me to use their real names but that was not what the ethics approval requested.

## **Elitism**

### **Traditional and School Elites**

Prior to offering a conceptualisation of elitism, some respondents took time to distinguish between traditional elites and schooled elites. They suggested that elites are always part of every society even though the factors that contribute to that status often differ. Currently in Ghana, the respondents argued that the school elites are products of Western schooling and colonialism, while traditionally elites were borne out of traditional Ghanaian social structures. As King states:

The elite we have right now owe their position to the fact that they went to school, European school, attained certain levels of education and so by virtue of that education they've attained a certain position in society. The so-called European created elite. The traditional elites emanated from our systems.

In support, Reverend says:

In pre-colonial societies, there was traditional elitism as against colonial/imperial neo-colonial elitism. Elitism therefore could be defined according to backgrounds.

King provides an analysis of how the schooling process tends to privilege a few. This minority group tends to become the elite created out of the school system. Further, while traditional elites gained their status by prescribed cultural tenets, the constitution of the school elite is largely borne out of the vestiges of colonialism. It is worth highlighting that the presence of these two groups further indicate a binary in conceiving the elite in Ghana. The conceptions of those schooled may not reflect the general outlook:

Indigenous elites were people who either because of age or wisdom became regarded in their society. That is different from what we have today. What we have today is mainly the school which divides society. If you take Ghana for example as 100%, 50% haven't been to school so they are not part of the system. Add another 30% who have been through JSS but can't speak or write English so that's 80%. By the time you do your calculation, you'll hit about 5% of the population who understand English and

do this well and so on.

The Council-Chair also indicates the existence of traditional Ghanaian/African elites, suggesting that their existence created a mutual attraction with European colonialists. The potential like-mindedness of the two groups facilitated the co-option of the Ghanaian elite into the European fold, providing the foundation to nurture elites to sustain the colonial pursuit. The school comes in to expand the base of nurturing European elites:

That's why they got their best recruits from elite groups that already existed in our own tradition like the Chiefs and the royal houses – so there was a natural affinity there. Beyond that, they then seek to broaden the base of the elite group by going outside because that's too narrow a base to do the work that they needed to be done.

As discussed in Chapter Four, the foundations of schooling in Ghana and universities in West Africa were associated with and significantly immersed in Christianity. This made religion a factor in the conferment of elite status. According to Council-Chair, Christianity combines with academic qualifications to reinforce the disposition of exclusivity, difference and superiority, attributes that Principe (cited in Dei, 2006, p.3) conceptualises as colonial. African spiritual worldviews are denigrated to project the sense of uniqueness and superiority of Christianity:

A special dimension of the elite thing also played out in the domain of religion. The Christian religion came in with an elitist attitude. That it is better than anything else that has been there, and members began quickly to identify themselves as the special privileged group – heaven is reserved for them, everybody else goes to hell.

Until recently, if you belonged to that class of professionals (lawyers, architects, engineers) and you were not also a member of the church at the same time then you would be considered to be something odd. There might be something wrong with you. The so-called elite thinks of African religion as devil worship. In fact, in this system when you analyse the content of the prayers, you are amazed at how much compassion and love that is there rather than the prayer that is devoted to cursing and invoking doom on everybody including people who have not offended you in any way.

Commenting further on religion, Council-Chair cautions advocates of African traditional forms

of life to be tolerant of the views of people who denigrate African outlooks, bearing in mind their predisposition:

We need to be a bit more patient to understand what has happened to colleagues who are also dismissive of African traditional religion – that is how they are brainwashed.

To Council-Chair, traditional African spiritual systems offer valuable religious and spiritual significance. He shares his experience with a Catholic priest who acknowledged the depth of spiritual knowledge imbued in Ghanaian systems of outdoorings a child (*a ceremony in Ghana where a newly-born child is given a name on the seventh or eighth day after birth*):

...asked me to come and help with the outdoorings of his son. The boy was born in the U.S and is almost two years old but it is now that they've brought him home and they want to do the traditional outdoorings because his father performed the traditional outdoorings for their first child, a girl. They saw it and there was something about it that made sense to them and they feel that the second one should also be taken down that road. The father didn't try to erect a fence around them, he said you guys go to church so bring the priest, when I finish mine, the pastor can do the other one as well. So the same thing happened this time but as I performed the libation, it wasn't just a straight thing, which would then become largely meaningless to them. Since I was doing it in Ewe [*a local language*], I first explained to them what I was going to do with the gestures – when I raise the calabash to the East and to the West, and its symbolisms. By the time it was over, the Catholic priest walked over to me and said Prof., I've had some of my best education today – a lot of what you were saying has a much deeper religious significance than what we have been taught to do. At the end, what I was doing to that child had a deeper religious significance than what the church people would offer. Whether that is going to change, well, that's another matter.

King offers an etymological account of Akan (*Ghanaian ethnic group*) words like *Abroba* (*gentleman*) and *Awuraba* (*lady*). These words, conferred on the schooled tended to demean the essence of the African being. In this instance, it was the schooled Ghanaians projecting exclusivity and “enlightenment” by debasing their being, further highlighting two sets of people striving for social statuses:

These words are gradually vanishing but they have a historical basis. An illiterate in Fanti is *frantam ni* i.e. one who puts on the cloth, the traditional attire. The person who went to school dressed like the “white man”. The women will perm their hair and wear frocks and even in 1914, in the Sekondi [*a town in Ghana*] ladies’ club, ladies were not supposed to speak the local language. It is now that because of convenience and so on women are wearing dresses but in the past, if you go to the villages, unschooled women hardly ever wore dresses – it was all cloth [*a Ghanaian way of dressing where men or women wrapped fabric around their body*]. So the more “white” you become the more you are a lady – Awuraba – and that title Awuraba came. The reverse is Abroba and people would take it like a gentleman – somebody who behaves well, he’s been cultured like the “White man”. Abroba is the child of the “white man” – educated by the “White man” and they wore suits. So sometimes when I go for a lecture and I see people wearing suits and I’m wearing a cloth, I say to them that I am surprised they are in suits and they’ve asked a *frantam ni* like me to come and talk to them – meaning I’m illiterate because the schooled should not wear cloths.

The comments from King, Council-Chair and Reverend in differentiating between the traditional and schooled elites in Ghana indicate how those schooled employ their epistemological and ontological dislocations (as discussed in Chapter Ten) as the basis for elitism. King’s etymological accounts of Awuraba and Abroba align with Ekeh’s (1975) claim that the colonist distinguished between schooled and unschooled Africans as educated and natives in order to honour Western education (this is discussed in detail in Chapter Twelve). The views of King and Council-Chair further concur with Smith’s (2012) claim that specific behaviours were expected of colonial officers to reflect the civilised West. Furthermore, these statements indicate the complicity of schooled Ghanaians in dislocating and humiliating their being. King says that, despite the presence of the traditional and schooled elites, the subliminal consequences of the school socialisation is the conferment of illusions and lack of self-pride. The sense of elitism granted through the process is only an intermediary position in the broader scheme of colonialism because:

...the soul of the culture changes and becomes another culture, so even though you may be Black your culture may have become White and you will not know. You are in black skin but in actual fact an English person. It created that new kind of elite who could dialogue with the oppressor, the “white man”, who had come to oppress us but

hide the oppression in the name of liberation – that they are civilising you. Somebody points a gun at you and says he’s civilising you.

The views in this section indicate two groups of elites in Ghana – the traditional elites and the schooled elite. The former are created out of cultural traditions while the latter is based on the colonial heritage. In order for the schooled to project their sense of elitism, they honour the values that arise out of the school system – which inherently demean African worldviews.

### **Conceptualisation of Elitism**

In my conversation with King, before he offered a conceptualisation of elitism he indicated he thinks Ghana is attempting to stratify society according to Western social structures. This is an approach he finds disengaged from and upsets Ghanaian social structures:

We want to structure ourselves into the same European structure of upper class and middle class etc. The European middle class is a producer class – they own factories and they do this and that. It’s a producer term; the class term is something that comes out of Marxist jargon. The Ghanaian middle class is made up of accountants and lawyers – these are parasitic classes, not producing, I mean it’s so absurd.

Council-Chair also indicates that the basis for schooling in Ghana is faulty. It alienates a child in their formative years and imbues colonial attributes, making it very difficult to rectify at the university level and any activity without this foresight would be worthless:

We need to fully understand the foundations on which H.E has been built, otherwise we will not succeed. It is not just H.E. It starts from the beginning when they isolate the kids from the rest of society. Right from elementary, you take the kids out of the society – the mission schools are on a hill somewhere looking down on the rest of the community and they do their best not to allow the kids to mix with the rest of society. If there is anything going on in the community, especially so-called social gatherings, cultural gatherings, and you sneak out of school to go and watch it, there were sanctions.

I agreed with Council-Chair and explained that the immediate impact of H.E on various sectors

of society influences my focus. I explained this in detail in Chapter One. Moreover, Council-Chair's comments confirm my schooling experiences in Ghana where the notions of superiority, difference and exclusivity are implanted in us from the onset of schooling.

Commenting on the conceptualisation of elitism, Council-Chair indicates factors like special socialisation, seclusion, pride, consciousness, difference, and distinct occupations geared to confer notions of exclusivity and perpetuated generationally as constituting elitism. He says:

An elite group basically is a group that is isolated from the rest of society, given a certain privileged kind of socialisation – you might call it education but it's really broad based socialisation and making sure that they grow up with this consciousness of being special and basically better than everybody else and would do anything to maintain that sense of being special. Inducements come in different kinds of privileges – privilege employment to reinforce that sense of being above everybody else and most importantly, apart from everybody else.

Similar to the views of Council-Chair, Pro-VC sees elitism as a system:

Where a select few get opportunities the majority don't and that select group keeps procreating itself.

Parallel to the thoughts of Council-Chair and Pro-VC, Educator identifies dynamics such as class, privilege, distinctness, apex of society, and education culminating to bestow privilege and dissimilarity as elitism. Educator, however, seems to emphasise material wealth:

We are referring to the cream of society. I view elitism as the haves within the society who tend to regard themselves at the privileged level separated from the less privileged. They are everywhere, even in the village. The elite tend to see themselves as the higher class, know-it-all class – it's a status conferred through education.

Pan-Africanist conceives elitism in Ghanaian H.E as self-alienation, arrogance and overseeing an undesirable structure and systemic subjugation, which is accompanied by a mislaid sense of purpose. To Pan-Africanist, elitism is subservient in nature, inferior in outlook, although it is

portrayed as superior:

With regards to the colonial heritage, basically, people who are separating themselves from others in order to raise themselves higher than others. There is a concept in Twi [*a Ghanaian language*] called ahumasu – which basically [means] taking your body and lifting it up and [is] also a word for arrogance.

In our academic pursuits, instead of doing things that sustain ourselves, we are following the mandate of the so-called West for their benefit. So with elitism in that context, people serve as intermediaries or ideological strands that don't find their roots in here and aren't for our best interest. I see them similar to the indigenous rulers who were under the British system. Also like a plantation system in the Western enslavement to function like overseers. They had this concept of meritorious manumission, which is that, if you sell out your other black people, they'll give you your freedom or give you other perks and things of that nature. I see elitism to be on par with being an overseer, indirect colonialist ruler.

Theatre offers quite a different perspective to the earlier conceptualisations. He sees elitism as ability to influence society. He identifies factors like education, affluence, unique skills, and wisdom as key to achieve elitism:

Elitism is centred around people who perceive themselves as well educated with their intrinsic quality, which is worthy – highest intellect, wealth, specialised training and so many other things; as such, they see themselves as a class. I believe that naturally, they see themselves as people who can influence authority. In H.E institutions, we assume that we are capable of influencing governance.

According to Reverend, elitism is a mental disposition that seeks to damage other people's worldviews in order to dominate them:

Elitism is a philosophy and also a method/methodology. Elitism is a system that suppresses people and destroys the roots of their being. For instance, colonial exigency came to de-culture and suppress what people had, and impose a different culture without taking cognisance of what was available to the people.



In Change-Agent's view:

The top hierarchy of society in any form is elitism.

The themes that emerge from the responses on the conceptualisation of elitism centre on power, privilege, prestige, exploitation, difference, a sense of superiority, influence and alienability. Per the responses, conceptualising elitism is very multifaceted yet converges as a system of socialisation consciously designed to confer notions of pre-eminence, distinction, and awe to the schooled. It operates with the aim of bestowing privilege and influence through the conferment of power through special occupations.

The responses on elitism reveal both the complexity and fluidity of the phenomenon in Ghana. Nevertheless, the salient features in the conceptualisations of elitism are similar to attributes classified as colonial – privilege, power, superiority, difference and exclusivity (Dei & Kempf, 2006; Principe cited in Dei, 2006, p.3). It is therefore safe to argue that elitist education is inclined to have colonial tendencies. The responses further reveal that the basis for elitism in Ghanaian universities significantly dwells on the acceptance of Western outlooks and perspectives. Holders of such outlooks have bought into “whiteness and acceptance of white values” as measure of the scale of human worth and social status as indicated in the theoretical framework. The subliminal schema to inferiorise “non-white” is the basis for elitism in Ghana's H.E.

### **Values of Traditional and Schooled Elites**

Considering the dichotomy established between the traditional and schooled elites, I enquired on their dispositions towards exploitation of society and general outlook to life. King states the rigid systems of governance restricted the activities of traditional elites:

There is a difference between the indigenous elite and the so-called European-created elite. The traditional systems were not easy to manipulate hence they couldn't be that exploitative.

In Change-Agent's opinion, the traditional African worldview was not materialistic and traditional systems of governance made little room for exploitation:

The foundations of traditional African societies and all it stood for were not really for the material. The centrality of life and everything was for sustainability, for generations unborn and the wellbeing of the society. The composition of various traditional councils made it difficult to exploit.

However, Council-Chair observes that, to an extent, the elite groups shared mutual affinity due to the desire to perpetuate the status quo to preserve the power, privilege and prestige they enjoy:

There is a sense in which they are similar. Don't forget the one group basically becomes also the other group. The majority of the people who are drawn into education are drawn into it through missionary education, at least originally or even now.

On exploitation, similar to King's opinion, Council-Chair thinks the traditional elites were not as exploitative due to structures that existed in African societies:

Checks and balances within the traditional setting. Remember they had a lifelong guarantee as a chief, you are born a royal, and that's it. Nobody can take it away from you but there were some rules. If you belong to that group and you choose to ignore the so-called ordinary people, or treat them with disdain, you do so at your own peril. They have ways of neutralising you – it can be very brutal, in some areas they say chiefs cannot be destooled – well, that is even more dangerous. They can poison you, which is a way of getting rid of you although nobody will say this publicly. You will die quietly in your sleep – and they get rid of you.

The requirement for royal households to factor the needs of citizens in governance, as indicated by Council-Chair, reiterates the emphasis placed on the wellbeing of society in traditional African education (Avoseh, 2013; Balogun, 2008; Kasongo, 2010). However, the threats Council-Chair indicate seem distant from the schooled elites because as Pan-Africanist suggests in his conceptualisation of elitism, the schooled elite function in a bigger system of exploitation. The schooled elites in political leadership face external threats when they attempt to usurp the colonising structures. In Chapter Twelve of this thesis, Rawlings (2013), a former President of Ghana, mentions Western orchestration of coup d'état in Africa when African governments decide to abandon Western interests. Additionally, Council-Chair's observation

supports the point that the African political class owe their existence and validity to colonialism (Ekeh, 1975).

### **How Elitist is H.E in Ghana?**

The responses to how elitist is H.E in Ghana were wide-ranging. A group of respondents (three) thought that H.E in Ghana has lost its elitism due to the dwindling prospects of material prosperity and unavailability of jobs. Other reasons were the growth of communities around previously secluded university campuses, and universities' inability to influence society. Despite the challenges, the respondents contend that H.E remains a springboard to the echelons of various socio-economic institutions and political organisations in Ghana. King, for instance, maintains that, although H.E in Ghana is not as elitist as before, it offers a springboard to other elite groups despite the prevailing scarcity of jobs:

Not that H.E is elitist but it opens the door for you to join the elites. The elitism is changing with time because right now, H.E does not promise you a good job so the initial thing of H.E promising you good jobs and a good position is going down. Now, what you have to do is you do H.E and add it with a political class – so the political class gives you the status.

Council-Chair, basing his stance on the content of education, thinks the magnitude of elitism has reduced because the initial ties with European universities and lecturers pursuing European supremacy have reduced. However, he argues that some lecturers are unconscious of the politics of knowledge so may be teaching Africa but through a European lens. Notions of elitism also tend to infiltrate academic disciplines in the fields of Business and Medical Sciences:

It is no longer as elitist as it was for various reasons. In the early days all the lecturers except for one or two were British. The syllabus was drawn up in London for us. Exams were set and they may be graded here by lecturers on the ground who are British anyway but the final determination of the result was done externally by a crop of lecturers in Britain. They didn't hesitate to drum it into your head all the time that in the area of literature, there is not much to pay attention to beyond English literature – that is the best thing that had ever happened in the world of literature. The French were busy

doing the same thing; the best thing that has happened to the world of literature is what has been written by the masters of the French language. But the elitism still permeates some discipline like Medicine and [*Business*] Administration. Our students in most departments are able to do projects and take a lot more courses that deal with African realities. Even that, the angles from which those realities are being taught, might be distorted depending on the lecturers' level of awareness of the politics of knowledge. They may be teaching something on Africa but teaching it from a European point of view

Recounting his experience in attending university in Ghana, Council-Chair states:

In my final year, you won't see on my transcript "African Literature" because it wasn't there, largely. There was one course but it was a token. When I offered to do my long essay not only in African literature but oral literature, they said, What is that?! African literature? These are simple simple books. Can't you read that for yourself? That included Wole Soyinka and Chinua Achebe whose works were a challenge to professors of the English language. And we are being told that these are not really things that needed full attention.

Registrar claims that elitism in Ghanaian universities is virtually extinct. However, H.E potentially propels people into elite occupations, groups and associations. To him, the lack of employment opportunities hinders the realisation of the material perks needed to sustain an elitist outlook. Besides, the status previously associated with elitism is unavailable:

H.E used to be elitist but currently seeing things, is it still elitist? It used to be the case where even before you finished the university, UAC [*United Africa Company – a British company*], those kind of companies, will come to campus [to] hold discussions and recruit and even before you finish your final paper. You know where you are going, the car is there, that kind of thing. You may be right to say it is elitist to an extent.

Currently, there are instances where people finish university, one year, two years, and instances of three years without jobs – you are elite in terms of what? Of course, when you look at it from those who work in the institutions/public universities, then some sense of elitism probably exists. UTAG (University Teachers Association of Ghana),

TEWU (Tertiary Education Workers Union), FUSAG (Federation of University Senior Staff Association of Ghana), GUAA (Ghana University Administrators Association) – they would want to be seen as such. By way of their arguments for salary and even their conditions of service, they are providing special services – that is in some sense elitism.

Given that Theatre conceptualises elitism as influence, Ghanaian universities' inability to significantly influence society made them non-elitist:

I do not think that we can consider H.E as elitist because our influence is quite minimal. I say so because the research we undertake here does not transcend the walls of the university. Our influence on society is not apt because we lack self-introspection and do not engage in things that serve as example for the larger society.

In contrast, six respondents portrayed universities in Ghana as elitist. Their positions were because of university education being a means to privilege a minority, influence the structuring of society, social mobility, and a focus on foreign (mainly European) curricula. Additionally, the disconnection between universities and society both in content and activities, and the use of English in university make them elitist. The respondents argue that although Eurocentric perspectives shape, offer esteem and confer realities on students, these worldviews inhibit students' understanding of Self, society and the world.

Touching on their specific responses, Pan-Africanist judging Ghanaian universities as Eurocentric argues that universities are still elitist because they fail to confer knowledge of Self and create local realities. Universities dwell on foreign and usually irrelevant perspectives; these mislaid dynamics remain the basis for power and privilege. To Pan-Africanist, Ghanaian universities “miseducates” and “diseducates”. He explains:

I hardly find people doing works driven by our own theoretical frameworks, driven by our own conceptual frameworks, in our own languages, and things of that nature. So again, these are like people who are put in places to serve outside interest, Euro-Asian interest specifically. I definitely think that is the overwhelming trend. Recently I went to the African Studies Association of Africa Conference in Ibadan – in there everyone was like we need to use our own theories, our own concepts and blah blah blah – they were not doing it but they were exhorting everyone to do it. Why don't we just do it and

stop saying it. It was something I was disappointed in but not surprised. We are mis-oriented and dis-oriented and I think it's part of the miseducation and diseducation because even in that same conference someone was talking of the history of medicine and was talking of the Greeks and I was like my goodness! The Greeks worshipped Imhotep [*ancient Kemit (Egyptian) scholar*] – what are you talking about?! There is a long way to go and I think a big issue is the miseducation – not giving people the right information and diseducation – not giving people any information especially about themselves as Africans and African people.

Reverend agrees with Pan-Africanist, claiming that the early criticisms of elitism in Ghanaian universities are still prevalent. To Reverend, products from universities are disconnected from the milieu and become characters for mockery:

I always crack jokes about what Kobina Sekyi [*Ghanaian writer, nationalist lawyer and politician*] captured in his book, *The Blinkards*. Those early days, 1914–1915, he was already writing about what he had observed; it hasn't changed. He criticised it through drama and theatre and thought people would pick something out of it. Unfortunately, it is rather after post-independence that people are entrenching these elitist, high-class, bourgeoisie types of lifestyles. Taking Kobina Sekyi again – onim ka, onim di, abrofusem [*Europeanisation*] – he used lampooned names and characters to project, and today if you take his book you still find these trends and characters who fit into Kobina Sekyi's book, at universities in Ghana.

Reverend accuses the West as agents working to sustain the status quo as it shackles the African mind:

Our education was tailored from the colonial time through to a point in 1957 when Nkrumah came and wanted the African personality. The African personality was to take care of who the African is, what the Ghanaian can contribute and he was so eager and spread it fast. Thinking about the OAU [*Organisation of African Unity*] and then all of a sudden incurred the displeasure of those who brought the prevailing elitist approach and so ousted him. The international politics, local internal politics as well as domestic politics has always been a very tight rope for the African leader to follow and to walk.

Reverend therefore calls for a paradigm shift where education is not secluded from society but integrated into society. Ghanaians need to find value in Self and construct education to reflect society:

I think we still can evolve a method of teaching, a method of generating funds internally without depending on any of these strong Western structures or powers. Lartey [*a deceased politician*] came up with domestication but they made fun of him. Somehow, his ideas could have helped but nobody with the elitist mindset would like to take that line because they are already in their comfort zone, but we need to revolutionize the way we do things as Africans. The first is the way we teach, second is the way we accept ourselves or the other way round. So, H.E is still elitist because it doesn't reflect its society, it doesn't bring the local content.

Reverend sees the English language of instruction in universities as inappropriate, and since African culture does not shape H.E, it ends up creating unthinking and uncritical beings. They are like machines (mechanical):

Even language to teach a person in his language using existing informal methods of teaching to highlight, the person learns with some kind of cognitive appreciation of what is being taught. We can look in our own cultures and develop appropriate ways of teaching and learning. Because teachers are trained within the Western paradigm, they are not able to link it and integrate the local content, thus producing "roboted" [mechanical] beings.

Educator echoes the views of Pan-Africanist and Reverend, indicating that the significant role university education has in determining the quality of life a person is likely to have in Ghana makes it highly elitist:

To the extent that once you've gone through the university system you are different from all other people who have not done so. Ghana is divided into those who have gone through the university system and beyond and those who are yet to reach [it]. Even after senior high school, you are not likely to find any good job, you roam the streets but after university, people feel they are well positioned even if not immediately they know they have a brighter future as opposed to those at the secondary level and below

who don't see any future because they've not gone to the university. Even with the other tertiary institutions like the polytechnics, people graduate and feel they have not gone through degrees so they are nowhere near the others. So university education is elitist, highly elitist.

On the issue of language raised by Reverend, I asked Council-Chair whether English language is privileged in Ghana because it facilitates the schooled elites' exploitation of society as it dislocates most citizens. Council-Chair responds:

It's deeper than that. Because the language come with a new value/knowledge system, the cultural baggage of language is one that becomes so deep rooted that nothing can change it once it is established so that's where the language thing becomes so crucial.

The concerns about language raised by Council-Chair and Reverend support the assertions of Katz (2015), Nwokeocha (2014), and Amegago (2000) on the outcomes of linguistic dislocation as well as the potency of language as a tool for colonialism. The issue of language is discussed in detail in Chapter Ten. Even though some respondents claim the extent of elitism in Ghanaian universities has waned, Council-Chair's suggestion of elitism in Business and Medical Studies supports Awoonor-Williams' (2013) claims that medical education in Ghana is elitist. Furthermore, the view that Ghanaian universities are elitist concurs with Professor Duwiewua Mahama's (Ghana's former Executive Director, National Council for Tertiary Education) position that H.E in Ghana is elitist due to limited accessibility (GNA, 2015).

## **Conclusion**

We have been looking at how elitist H.E is in Ghana. Most of the respondents do not perceive Ghana's H.E as elitist as it used to be. However, they note some elitist tendencies; the reverence and privilege accorded to European worldviews remains the basis for elitism, and academics who hold European perspectives sustain the outlook. Elsewhere, academic fields like Medicine and Business have become elitist due to the exclusivity attached to them. However, the responses overall indicate that the basis for elitist notions and dispositions in Ghanaian universities centre predominantly on holding Eurocentric epistemologies, ontologies and associated behavioural inclinations by the schooled.



Per the responses elicited, elitism is associated with quite destructive and exploitative connotations: power and privilege to dominate others based on perceived exclusivity and superiority. However, I contend power and privilege are not necessarily destructive. It is the orientation and values attached to them and the reasons why they are sought that ultimately determine their purpose. In any case, there is the need for every society to educate people in leadership positions in various facets of society, an echelon which is also classified as elite. H.E in Ghana should centre on the best of Ghanaian/African epistemological, ontological, and axiological perspectives to advance society socio-culturally and politico-economically. I suggest that elitism should be neither about material consumption nor imitations of others and must not grant a need to negotiate for acceptance or be consigned to a state requiring validation by others.

The Ghanaian who desires to assume the status as “elite” must develop and offer an alternative consciousness to the prevailing one, which the responses indicate are contemptible. Furthermore, the current notions of elitism in Ghana based on European attributes seem self-defeating and inclined to entrench the cycle of self-hate and lack of self-confidence that manifest diversely. For instance, skin bleaching among African women (UNEP, 2008), fathers adopting European names for their children, and the general privilege accorded to Western perspectives. The conceptualisations of elitism offered by respondents and the conceptualisation of colonialism by Simmons and Dei (2012) and Principe (cited in Dei, 2006, p.3) converge on notions of exclusivity, superiority and difference, to assume positions of power, privilege and prestige. However, in Simmons and Dei’s (2012) anti-colonial theory, they recommend those with colonial power (in the case of Ghana) and those schooled in various forms of authority to relinquish some privilege and power in order to produce harmonious relationships in society.

The next chapter illustrates an analysis and discussion of responses gathered on how to inculcate community service oriented values (CSOVs) into Ghanaian H.E. I deduced from my literature review the contention that H.E in Africa and Ghana denies its beneficiaries a sense of community and community service-oriented values.

## **Section Four: Empirical Aspects of the Study**

### **Chapter Seven: Inculcating Community Service Oriented Values (CSOVs) into Ghanaian H.E**

#### **Introduction**

As discussed in Chapter Four, the public purpose (the common good of society) is fundamental to traditional African education. I illustrate in Chapters Two and Fourteen how Ghana's national anthem and the University of Ghana's anthem respectively reiterate the importance of the public purpose in African notions of education. I discuss in Chapter Eleven the views of two prominent African scholars and former Presidents, Kwame Nkrumah and Julius Nyerere, of Ghana and Tanzania respectively, on the nature of universities required in Africa. They argued fundamentally that African universities confer self-centred attributes and are thus devoid of the public purpose, hence the need for transformation.

Furthermore, the review of literature and the discourses on H.E in Africa and Ghana, specifically the works of Higgs (2003), Achebe (2008), Nukunya (2003), Gwanfogbe (2011), Tangwa (2011), and Balogun (2008) contend that H.E in Africa lacks community oriented values. I support the observations of these scholars based on my H.E experience in Ghana and further contend that it does not adequately inculcate community service-oriented values in students. I conceive community service oriented values as an orientation or disposition to act in directions that are inclined to benefit society as a whole. Simmons and Dei's (2012) anti-colonial theory also advocates that education of the colonised must project traditional cultural worldviews. Considering that traditional African education emphasised the public purpose, it is vital to find out how values of community oriented service can be brought in to H.E in Ghana.

#### **Challenges to Achieving a Public Purpose**

Ghana's premier university, the University of Ghana, stresses the importance of the public purpose in its anthem; this indicates an awareness. However, this drive is certain to come with challenges. Therefore, I first sought to find out from the respondents the circumstances that have inhibited a realisation of the public purpose.

In response to this, Pro-VC indicates an unfriendly relationship that exists between universities and society in respect to suggestions from universities:

Sometimes the public is not even ready to accept your inputs – that’s a huge challenge. Whether they’ll accept it in good faith and not think that because you are from the university, because that’s a big issue. Even sometimes, when the Police arrests you and they realise you are from the university, their attitude changes not for the better but for the worse, they coil in fear. In other instances, they say, you people in university think you know everything so we’ll deal with you. So sometimes, the public perception of the university in itself is an issue and I think the onus is on the university to demystify that perception.

In connection with the power relations between university and society cited by Pro-VC, I asked whether the fear of losing the prestige associated with the university [*the myth of universities being all-knowing and a citadel of knowledge*] creates a reluctance to demystify the perceptions. In response, Pro-VC suggests that to be relevant to society:

It is not in the interest of the university to maintain those myths to sustain their power because they need the public to support it otherwise it will cease to exist, so it is in the interest of the university to ensure that its image is a favourable one.

To realise a worthwhile relationship between universities and societies, Pro-VC proposes that:

University management must become proactive, be on the positive side of issues, and let their voice be heard. If the public can see that the university is extolling its cause, then the public can support it.

If you sit too long in the university, you find it too difficult to explain society.

The observation of Pro-VC regarding power relations between the university and society resonates with the power struggle between Nkrumah (Ghana’s first president) and the University of Ghana. Also, Pro-VC’s expression of society’s reluctance to accept views from the university and his assertion that “if you sit too long in the university, you find it too difficult to explain society” gives credence to Nyerere (1975) and Nkrumah’s (1973c) position that

universities in Tanzania and Ghana respectively are isolated from society, as discussed in Chapter Eleven. It also ties in with some aforementioned conceptualisations of elitism where the privileging of Western worldviews in Ghanaian universities inhibits beneficiaries' ability to influence society meaningfully.

To Reverend, the main challenge towards attaining the public purpose in Ghana's H.E is "Greed", which is due to the unhelpful character bestowed through H.E. Reverend points at misconstrued conceptions of leadership and disconnection between universities and society as contributing factors:

Lack of awareness that service is better than being served. Servant leadership, but this is not what the elitist minded people think. If we wash each other's feet and respect each other, it will be far better for us than one person washing the other person's feet. We haven't attained anything radically and positively concrete because the kind of education we receive makes us very individualistic, self-centred and very egoistic.

Even though there are lots of herbs around us, which are all industries around us or in communities, we can't see because we have alienated the school from society. The ordinary person has been looked down upon severely such that, they have lost hope. Education should not be decoupled from the traditional practices and beliefs of the people. Instead of claiming ownership of our resources and world, we are only ready to work for pittance.

The views of Reverend share anti-colonial theory's position that Western systems of knowledge generation and validation are against the colonised, thus it is important for the colonised to validate themselves in their indigenous systems of thought (Simmons & Dei, 2012). Similarly, the disconnection between universities and society, a factor some respondents mentioned as the basis for elitist notions, is reflected in Reverend's comments.

Sharing his view, Theatre argues that some ignorance on the part of academics and students constrains accomplishing the public purpose. Ghanaian universities seem to have misplaced foci, and are thus extraneous to society. Universities do little to make their presence felt in society and avenues for society to contribute in the affairs of universities are non-existent.

Theatre cautions that the over-emphasis on courses deemed to have greater economic returns is self-destructive:

We are all ignorant – we need to set relevant questions in examinations. We should give equal priority to courses and not see one course as being more important to the other. We should remember, as Dr. Aggrey [*early Ghanaian scholar*] said, the black and white notes give harmony on the piano. The public should also be involved in our thinking and make sure that whatever we think of doing should benefit the society because that is where we belong and we'll go back to the community. If H.E cannot change the face of our economy, then we are failing. We need to censor a lot of the courses coming in and not make our country look like it's only for money. We should look for things that would bring the cultural element in the highly educated.

The fact that Theatre suggests that universities must change the face of Ghanaian economy indicates the rippling effects of an unworthy education system. In any case, it is important to mention that a lot of thought needs to go into the nature of the economy necessary to help enhance the wellbeing of the citizenry. It is quite obvious that the raw material exporting economy is short-changing the country. Elsewhere, the cultural element Theatre raises aligns with the provisions of Mbiti (2015), Obanya (2011) and Tangwa (2011) that African culture should shape African education. Moreover, Theatre's caution on the economic emphasis given to some courses corresponds with Gwanfogbe's (2011) statement that the "African perception of education was shaped by the introduction of relationships between educational achievement and socioeconomic advancement" (p. 48).

According to King, the public purpose is difficult to achieve due to the faulty foundations of schooling in Ghana:

Like I said earlier, somebody somewhere needs to think about how we get out of this [*H.E*]. You don't use the same structures created by the Europeans to divide us as means to uniting. Somebody who thinks it is his right to do evil and sees evil as right. It's their right to kill you and see their killing you as right. But you can't kill them – yours is wrong.

The challenges in achieving the public purpose in Ghana's H.E, per the responses, have arisen out of greed on the part of the educated, the disconnection between universities and society, faulty foundations and purposes of schooling. Moreover, the over-emphasis on business programmes, deemed to have greater economic returns, inhibit the public purpose.

### **Translating the Privilege of H.E into a Sense of Responsibility**

Attaining university qualifications in Ghana bequeaths some social privileges considering that less than ten percent of the population have such qualifications. However, Nyerere (1975), Nkrumah (1973c), and Ekeh (1975) argue the schooled African completes school with an enormous sense of entitlement and little regard towards the development of their societies. The challenge towards attaining the public purpose becomes how to translate the sense of privilege acquired through H.E into a sense of responsibility towards society.

Commenting on this enquiry, Council-Chair cites Medical Sciences as a field of study that bestows such privilege. However, in his view, transforming the privilege into a sense of responsibility has been difficult because of the outlook and pedagogical approaches employed in H.E. The nature of Ghana's H.E tends to condition anything worthy should be external to their society, hence the school grows finding little or no worth in their cultural worldviews:

There are glaring areas of demonstration of what you are saying. Let's say medical education; the average medical student, ultimately medical doctor, believes that when it comes to medicine, Africa almost has nothing to offer. But [they] still [have] to deal with the fact that [the] majority of our people do go to the traditional healers and some of the people who go there are not necessarily only the so-called rural non-literate. People from our realms, professors included, sometimes medical officers themselves, are going there. But instinctively, they've been taught to believe that it is inferior, not only inferior but [is] actually a very dangerous system when clearly the evidence speaks to the contrary that at least in a few instances, the best cure that is available is available from the traditional system of health delivery. It is not without its own negative sides and challenges but it is the way instinctively they think of it as a problem rather than an area of knowledge, which has something to offer.

Council-Chair says ultimately, to harness this privilege requires a natural relationship between

universities and society. Universities must focus on African knowledge systems because knowledge is a powerful resource that serves explicit and implicit purposes. Besides, knowledge is an important resource for people who create and disseminate it. Any progress would require universities to:

Establish an organic relationship with society not in a very vague sense – we have to establish an organic relationship with African’s systems of knowledge. There are systems of knowledge that have been developed in Africa over the century, over the millennia, which are as classic as anything that has happened elsewhere – whether it is in the area of governance, administration of justice, health delivery, agriculture.

Pro-VC questions the existence of this privilege. To him, it is extinct. Furthermore, the sense of responsibility cannot be realised when unemployment is high among the schooled:

Does that privilege still exist?! Are we sure there is a sense of privilege in having a degree when you cannot find a job? You are walking the streets, you are frustrated, you are disillusioned. There are people, three years after university who can’t find a job. Some are even saying what’s the point of going to the university?

Based on Pro-VC’s stance, I asked what happened to universities being a conscience of society and the need to endeavour to educate students in that light. In response, Pro-VC states that Ghanaian universities desire to be the conscience of society but is tamed into timidity due to past persecutions from politicians thus manifesting in a cautious approach:

University as the conscience of society used to happen. In the end, they jailed some people and others were arrested. They were intimidated until they quietened down and I don’t think that is lost on us, so if you are doing it you have to be careful. If you step on the wrong toes, they may not take you directly but they find other ways to silence you. So if you value your personal wellbeing and so on, you have to be careful. So academic freedom, you can talk, yes, you can do it but be careful because when they target you, it can become a problem for you.

Pro-VC thinks that the sense of responsibility would be achieved when Ghana’s economy is expanded to create opportunities for people to assume this sense of responsibility:

To put it roughly, our politicians should stop fooling around and concentrate on the things that bring us development and unless we develop and expand the economy, people cannot enter service. So we should work hard to expand the economy so people can find jobs and that's where it starts from – unless you create the opportunity for them to serve you, you can't expect it to serve you. And it is when you enter service that you are able to display your sense of responsibility but now the opportunity is limited.

Pro-VC's position on jobs brings out pertinent issues on job creation but it is equally important to examine the kinds of jobs university graduates would desire considering that H.E in Ghana is a path to escape traditional forms of occupations like farming, fishing and animal husbandry (Nukunya, 2003). Hutchins' (1991) caution on the promises of H.E and good jobs also comes to the fore. Although Pro-VC holds politicians in contempt, Nyerere (1975) also scorns the universities that nurtures them. Pro-VC's dismay in politicians gives credence to the "shockprise" (*shock and surprise*) I mentioned in Chapter Two expressed by academics when politicians elevate themselves above society. Academics tend to forget that politicians are products of the H.E system. It becomes important for academics to interrogate the culture that shape Ghanaian universities. There might be a few points to adopt from Vandalism as a subculture at the University of Ghana.

Theatre also contends H.E in Ghana does not grant any privilege considering the uncertainties associated with H.E. Commercialisation of universities and the consequent desire of students to pursue programmes considered to offer greater job prospects thwarts such an idea as such courses fail to enhance understanding of society and develop people's humanity:

These days do we call ourselves as privileged going to school? People have to pay as much as 10,000 cedis [*about NZ\$ 4,000*] to enter the Ph.D. for four years. This is not a privilege! Therefore, people being responsible to the society is waning because people are sponsoring themselves so they come back to society to enrich themselves. It has become a business.

Instead of concentrating on courses that tends to enhance people's morality, people's outlook, values and the rest, we don't go for them. We downplay some courses, thinking other courses are more important because you'll get money. I



think students need more sponsorship.

Council-Chair shares Theatre's frustrations on the privilege accorded to some academic courses. Council-Chair suggests that some university authorities are reluctant to promote academic courses deemed "non-market driven". However, Council-Chair's comments suggest that a focus on Ghanaian culture offers a competitive advantage, which has the potential to draw more students:

You won't believe it, when I tried to introduce dance at [*The School of Performing Arts*], people were laughing. When the dance programme took off, within the first two–three years it was generating enough income for the university in foreign exchange. When the Chemistry Department run out of chemicals, at one point they had to draw on that money to buy chemicals for the Chemistry Department. I once had to confront a VC publicly when he demeaned certain courses.

Although Theatre suggests that students should be sponsored through H.E in order to develop altruistic values towards society, the attitudes of those sponsored in the past who have been and are in leadership fails to adequately support Theatre's stance. H.E in Ghana was virtually free for early beneficiaries but there is little evidence of their altruism to society. In fact, Nkrumah (1973c) accused academia of self-centredness and displaying a biased relationship with society. The country spends a lot of resources to school people and to provide incentives for their life after school yet the schooled reciprocate with mediocrity. This does not mean sponsorship should not be encouraged. However, there are the neoliberal policies from Bretton-Woods institutions pushing African governments to shift the cost of H.E to students. It is a complicated matrix.

On his part, Registrar advises that to translate the privilege of H.E into a sense of responsibility requires legislating policies to ensure this relationship:

The society spends a lot on the university and there is the need to pay back but there's no avenue and laid-down policy. Let me give you an example, we spend so much on medical students, whether they pay fees or not, the fees that they pay is peanuts when you take into consideration the amount of money used in training them, yet when they finish, they are not bound by anything. There are several of

them who would not serve for even a year and they leave for South Africa, America and Europe.

Educator agrees with arguments by Nsamenang and Tchombe (2011), Nukunya (2003), and Okoro (2010) that the lack of African perspectives in African universities causes a disjuncture between African societies and universities. To Educator, the way to translate the privilege of H.E into a sense of responsibility is to establish a relationship between universities and society to equip people to master their environment and address its challenges. Educator says:

First will be to relate learning at the university system to local issues and local problems – to localise university education to solve local problems. Knowledge skills and attitudes that are developed to enable us to exercise control over local resources for our development. If the universities do so, then they would be bound to come down to the local level to mobilise resources for enhancement of our way of life. But as long as they study and look beyond the local system then the elitist system will be perpetuated. Universities are separated from society and this threatens the relevance of universities.

On the other hand, Reverend attributes the difficulty to a misplaced sense of achievement – the schooled become a comprador in the exploitation of their societies yet they see that as success. Ghanaian universities do not create the awareness of Africa's subjugation therefore students lack appropriate agency therefore are largely ignorant of Western expansionism and the incursions of Asia. Moreover, universities must liaise with the aspirations of society and display African culture:

Wrong self-actualisation is the cause. We need to train people to use head, heart and hand effectively to add to the productivity of the society they live in. Education should not be displayed through trickery, negative wisdom and negative intelligence. We have to realise and become conscious that:

1. We have been oppressed
2. That there is a never-ending battle as an African against imperial European powers and in other instances Asian. So you (Africans) should be up and doing because you'll be fighting strong systems. The powers that be who contribute to

the educational kitty would make sure that the things that make you identify yourself are deleted and then they impose unnecessary rotten approvals for you – you become slaves. We should have alternative educational programmes. Consciousness is most important.

In all, the respondents suggest that the privilege associated with Ghanaian H.E has waned due to the cost of H.E and bleak economic returns. The position that the university has lost its sense of privilege due to waning material returns demonstrates the perilous basis for conferring honour. Even though the economic is important, it should not assume overarching focus of Ghanaian universities. However, if privilege is conceived primarily as a product of materialism, then the significance of Ghanaian universities is vulnerable and in the words of Educator “threatens the relevance of universities”. Moreover, the desire to transform society to enhance ways of life is inclined to be a mirage. It is important for Ghanaian universities to emphasise the nurturing of worthy social values through a connection of academic activities with society to initiate the sense of reciprocity needed between universities and society.

### **Bringing Community Service Oriented Values (CSOVs) in to H.E**

Even though my experience through school largely failed to demonstrate the importance of a sense of community, my residence in Commonwealth Hall taught me the importance of a sense of community and working collectively. I have discussed in Chapter Four how the community is central in the notion of traditional African education. I have also presented in Chapter Eleven the expositions of two prominent African leaders and scholars, Julius Nyerere (Tanzania) and Kwame Nkrumah (Ghana) who argue for the need for African H.E to connect with society in order to share the aspirations of society to be meaningful to society.

Based on the analysis of literature and my lived experiences, I argue that H.E in Ghana lacks the inculcation of Community Service Oriented Values. This informs my decision to find out how it can be inculcated into H.E in Ghana. I conceptualise community service oriented values as the awareness and willingness to act in the interest of our communities. The community can range from the unit in which people reside to the country as a whole. My worldview is supported by the African adage that the prosperity of an individual does not make a town rich. As cited in Higgs (2008), Kenyan philosopher Mbiti captures the essence of community values

from an African perspective as “I am because we are; and since we are, therefore I am” (p. 165). South African anti-apartheid activist, Bantu Steve Biko (1978) says:

We regard our living together not as an unfortunate mishap warranting endless competition among us but as a deliberate act of God to make us a community of brothers and sisters jointly involved in the quest for a composite answer to the varied problems of life. Hence in all we do we always place man first and hence all our action is usually joint community oriented action rather than individualism. (p. 42)

Achebe (2008) captures the dangers associated with lacking community centred values: “I fear for you young people because you do not understand how strong is the bond of kinship. You do not know what it is to speak with one voice” (p. 134).

Responding to the means to instil community service oriented values into Ghana’s H.E, Pro-VC focused on Ghana’s National Service Scheme. A statutory requirement in Ghana is that graduates of public tertiary institutions serve the country at different levels for a year. There is a National Service Secretariat in charge of the postings. Pro-VC believes that organically initiating community service oriented values into universities requires potential students to experience the community through National Service before heading for university. Pro-VC thinks it is important because during his school experiences, there was no explicit awareness that his education should be applied to society:

There was a time when you had to do National Service before coming to the university. You went into the society, look at it for a year, and I suspect that when you left that and came to the university, your perceptions will be a bit different from straight from school to university. You would have thought that the world is just like – from your comfortable home to university and so it doesn’t help with nurturing community service oriented values thus. So for me, the best way to inculcate these values is to break the educational career of a person and introduce that somewhere – may be long vac [*long vacation*] internship and things like that. Unless they go to the community to feel it, don’t expect that they’ll go to school, finish and know what should be done in the community.

For the majority of us, nobody ever mentions it that the training you are receiving should be able to be applied to your community. So some sensitisation is also important

during the learning career of the person to get them to focus on issues like that sometimes.

According to Educator, there is a need to eradicate the expression of inferiority, which manifests as elitism in Ghanaian universities. It is important to establish relationships with broader society in order to create the right epistemology, ontology and ethics to enhance ways of life. Educator contends that universities' Euro-centred curricula need alteration to reflect and project Ghanaian culture and society because these are foundational to the development of community service oriented values:

We don't tap on local knowledge. We don't have systems that allow the society to make inputs in our activities in the university. We look for foreign examples and assume that they are the best and continue to condemn the local examples.

Once you begin to count on foreign examples to draw your curriculum and leave yours out, then you look down upon your own society. You are not serving it and not making inputs. Until we recognise the importance of the local environment to education, H.E will be cut off from society.

This false sense of elitism, looking at it carefully, it is a form of inferiority complex. You look down on your society and feel your society is so low and after going through the university, you are in a higher class. You have lifted yourself from your society's level to a higher level that compares to other societies and you feel great – it's a false sense, and an inferiority complex. Suffice to add that there are some highly educated individuals, professors, who always get so close to the society and work with the society, in that sense they don't have that false sense of elitism and not feel inferior but others really do.

Educator further adds that to strengthen community service oriented values necessitates refocusing H.E. Universities should censor the seductions and glamour surrounding globalisation albeit a point of reference and important phenomenon to keep an eye on:

There is an ongoing debate between globalisation and localisation; we think globally and act locally but this is conflicting. How do you put your mind globally and come

back to your community and act locally? H.E should think locally and act locally then we can get out of our problems. Until an individual is able to enhance requisite knowledge, skills and attitudes to mobilise and exercise mastery control of local resources in order to improve quality of life for themselves and society, there is no education.

H.E institutions are learning institutions; they are not educational institutions. We are only learning at our universities because when you say education it must be within the local context. In the absence of a culture within which the learning is situated, there is no education. That's why most of our courses study what other people have done and not identifying local problems and solving them. We can't ignore global issues but we must focus on our locality because that's where we live. That's where you improve upon your quality of life and it's through your own resources that you can improve your quality of life. You can't rely on other people's resources because they might be different; you can't rely on ice to improve your quality of life in Ghana.

Educator's position resonates with my contention that acquiring and exhibiting Western values describes the educated in Ghana. His assertion further contributes to the earlier discussion where elitism is primed on holding and displaying European values and also as a means of elevation above society. Educator's view reiterates the conceptualisation by Uduigwomen (2009) and Balogun (2008) of the educated in the African context – where a social outlook is emphasised. In addition it supports the suggestion by Ake (1993), Abdul-Raheem (1998), and Campbell and Worrell (2006) to critically interrogate globalisation from African perspectives.

Theatre indicates that some Departments in his university perform some amount of community service. However, it lacks funds and requires proper structuring:

We have something that we call Theatre for Development. We normally go out – if it's eradication of malaria, we put up shows and plays that create awareness of the situation at hand and its consequences. These are community services but even money for these activities is a problem. Are we doing much? I don't know! The orientation is there but the university could redesign the outreach programme and lecturers encouraged to follow up, it would help.

King says primary to achieving community service oriented values in Ghana's H.E is abandoning European outlooks because it creates dissonance with the African being and perspectives:

The whole idea of H.E must be reorganised from the basis of the society. Education is passing down the knowledge of who you are generationally so the Japanese go to school to become Japanese, English go to school to become English but the Ghanaian goes to school to become English. You need to have your roots and build on your roots and your own foundations.

Commenting on the university where he chairs the Council, Council-Chair discloses that there is early immersion of medical students into communities to inculcate community service oriented values in the students. As well, they are establishing centres for alternative medicine and ongoing consultation with experts to bring these institutes to fruition. Council-Chair touches on the different cultural outlooks to healthcare and given the importance of herbal medication to Ghanaians, the university is striving to enhance the study and production of herbal medication. However, he shares his concerns about the incursions of big pharmaceutical companies due to the profitability of the health sector:

In the community angle on medical education – we introduce them to the community early, right from the first year. The larger plan for the university is to include the establishment of an institute of herbal and traditional alternative medicine. We are discussing with a top level medical scientist with special interest in traditional herbal medicine, so we are hoping that he would help us to start this institute as soon as possible if things go well. It's going to be a challenge because you see, the medical field is a lucrative field for those who are interested in research and projects but then these research and projects are being sponsored by the big Western companies that survive on the various diseases that we are trying to eliminate. They are not interested in eliminating the disease – they find solutions that control the worst diseases that we have but in our system, the belief is that *Mawu wɔ dɔléle dɛ xexeame fuu gake dɔ sia dɔ ewɔ gbedada ne* [there is a cure for every disease, it is for us to seek to discover and uncover that cure]. It's a different philosophy of knowledge to the Western system that removes the immediate threat of death and holds you in a state of surviving on drugs. I

still believe that the knowledge systems of the world move round in cycles in different generations in different spaces. We've been in the leadership position before and it need not be in our lifetime but things are pointing towards the possibility of a re-emergence of African agency in world knowledge systems.

Council-Chair's call for this possible re-emergence must be a focus of Ghana's universities especially when little efforts are made to research African knowledge systems. Besides, the focus on herbal medication has the potential to connect universities to society and enhance attempts to promote community service oriented values.

Pan-Africanist also conveys thoughts identical to those expressed by King and, to an extent, Council-Chair. To Pan-Africanist, Western universities in African spaces are only manifesting their original intent—to serve foreign interest. Pan-Africanist calls for Ghanaian universities to focus on knowledge of the African Self, Africa's enemies, and appropriate behaviours that corresponds with these epistemologies. Furthermore, Ghana's universities must exude self-sufficiency and find a fine blend between “pure” scholarship and vocational skills:

That is a question of orientation, goals, aims, objectives. If you have a so-called educational system that is set up to serve your Euro-Asian (*Europeans and Arabs because of their role in invading Africa and enslaving Africans*) enemies, it is very difficult to do something that is going to serve African people. So when they are talking about classics, they talk about the Greeks, Rome.

I think the main function of H.E should be about the knowledge of Self, knowledge of enemy and then the behaviour that goes with that knowledge, and that comes back to your community service. If you have knowledge of Self, if you have knowledge of enemy that tells you what you should do to protect yourself from that enemy, what types of strategies you should use in order to protect yourself, look out for yourself, feed yourself, clothe yourself.

In fact, universities should be a model of self-sufficiency. It's important to do it in the university first because who is going to listen to these hothead academics who don't even know how to grow anything or build their own houses. But if we can say look at what we have done, this is a model of self-sufficiency, that puts us in a better position



to go in and do community service. The university becoming relevant to itself would also make it relevant to society.

Pan-Africanist sees the right leadership in universities as an important factor to advance community service oriented values. Similar to Reverend's comments, Pan-Africanist says in the absence of apt leadership, conscious Africans should influence people in their immediate networks:

Leadership can make a major impact. If we have a Vice Chancellor who is of that mindset, then you would actually see those things take place from the ground up. That's what I consider myself attempting to do in my small little sphere of influence but I think it could be a wider sphere if you have someone else who's of a higher position interested in implementing such things.

To Registrar, community service oriented values would manifest when the universities stop degrading the masses, their jobs and share in their aspirations. This relationship would establish a sense of reciprocity:

The universities think they are above society and generally do not want to associate with the "dirty" work people are engaged in society. For them to inculcate these values in students, engineering departments in some schools should even send their students to local welders in the community. By so doing, you influence these welders and understand their perspectives. Currently, the students are made to believe these welders and the likes are dirty and do not want to associate with them.

The responses on inculcating community service oriented values in Ghana's universities are multifaceted and recommend roles for all stakeholders. Government is encouraged to enact policies to ensure these community service-oriented values. For instance, this includes making people undertake National Service before entering university to help people come to terms with the realities in society. Respondents suggest that universities shelve the false sense of elitism and instead, create avenues for society to influence and contribute to its activities in order to reflect Self. To other respondents, the movement towards community service oriented values is present but requires restructuring to ensure the utmost benefit. Overall, the responses recommend a localisation of Ghana's universities, centred on solving societies' problems.

## Proactivity

Pro-VC espoused in the earlier section (*Translating the Privilege of H.E into a Sense of Responsibility*) that some academics suffered persecution from politicians in their attempt to serve as the conscience of society. Bearing this in mind, I still sought to find out whether universities were still attempting to be proactive towards community service oriented values and public purpose in the midst of the challenges.

Responding to this, Council-Chair cites a H.E conference titled “African H.E Summit: Revitalizing H.E for Africa’s Future” in Senegal in March 2015 as an act of proactivity among universities in Africa. The conference was to define a path to make H.E meaningful in Africa. Council-Chair says:

That’s what the African education in Senegal was all about. I presented a paper arguing that these people [*Europeans*] are trying to confuse us all over again so they’ve come back and are trying to tell us that the future of H.E is in science, mathematics and technology – really?! Has it always been like that? The humanities don’t count? The person you were talking about, Imhotep [*ancient Kemit scholar*], he was first and foremost a philosopher, okay, a leading mathematician and a healer. Since when have we cut off one area of knowledge and separated it from the other?

To Registrar, universities lack proactivity. Government decisions and policies do not reflect the influence and input of academics. In addition, there is increasing political partisanship in academia, however, proactivity requires independence of thought, objectivity and fairness:

The universities are not proactive enough. Look, there has been this debate whether to make secondary education three or four years and you haven’t even heard the stance of the University of Cape Coast. And this happens in other policy statements that are released. What is the university saying with regards to these things? They are just there! How do people feel your presence? Currently, it is also as if the politicians have captured the academia into their fold; they provide the material needs of the academia and the academia also finds it difficult to be critical. This is not good and won’t take us anywhere. To be proactive, the universities require to be truly independent in thought and be fair to all political parties and objective in their endeavours.

Pro-VC counsels universities to be proactive and informed, otherwise they might embarrass themselves when called on for insight. The university can do so effectively when they establish structures to think through national issues before commenting. Pro-VC recalls the mid-to-late 1990s when the University of Ghana endeavoured to be proactive in societal affairs. Secondly, Ghanaian society should have the proper attitude to academic talk; they should not brush it aside:

Before the university decides to become proactive it should be able to say something sensible – it is not because you have read a subject and that subject is applicable therefore you get up and speak. We have to think through relevant national issues then you'll be in a position to be proactive, and so there has to be some structures set up by the universities in order to do that effectively. In any case, sometimes university people are reluctant to come out because of the treatment they obtain when they do that. At a time when educational reforms were being put together, I remember stories of how some senior people in the university were told off when they tried to influence the matter the way they thought it should be. They were told to shut up. So that problem also exists. Some people who know this may be constrained to speak out for fear of being ridiculed and taken into a political arena and blown out, and it's easy for them to do that so people who know are careful.

Pro-VC was quick to state the potential tensions that arise from the attempts by universities to be proactive. The tension Pro-VC mentions resonates with the power struggle between the University of Ghana and the government of Ghana's first President, Kwame Nkrumah, in the 1960s (this is discussed in detail in Chapter Eleven). As Pro-VC illustrates, these tensions were prevalent in the 1990s, emphasising that these tensions do not help the country:

To be outside [*the university*] and dictate to the university, they won't take that and so there was a lot of conflict. You see, academics are a different breed. A VC [*Vice Chancellor*] once told us that some people in the Ministry [*of Education*] were trying to regard the university as an appendage of the Ministry of Education so the Ministry writes to instruct him. When he receives those letters, he puts them in the dustbin; they don't belong here. So when they [*Ministry*] instruct, you have to get people who know how to resist, otherwise they'll [*Ministry*] change the nature of the university. The tension between academia and political leadership is not healthy for the country. It's

useless and a waste of everybody's time but the reality in Ghana is what we see.

According to Theatre, universities need to work on many facets of their activities to become proactive. Public universities in Ghana have abandoned their initial focuses for “marketable” programmes, usually Business courses to boost revenue generated internally. To him, this stifles proactivity thus the need to refocus on their original emphasis. Theatre nevertheless acknowledges the tricky circumstances of universities where government funding is reducing thus the need to generate funds internally (IGF – Internally Generated Funds) through fee-paying courses and commercialising some aspects of university operations:

I am doing a research on the number of playwrights that the university has churned out since 1980. I've seventy-two playwrights and their plays are in the library on the shelves and out of that seventy-two, only four have been put on stage.

We are not doing enough in our proactivity and it is not making its presence felt in the society; it goes back to proper management. One of the banes is that traditional universities [*public universities*] in Ghana were meant for certain areas of specialisation. Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology – pure science and technology and students who were good in science were sent there; when you come to the University of Education, Winneba – specialist training in Ghanaian language, sports, music and the rest, were concentrations. The University of Ghana would talk about humanities, law and the rest and Cape Coast is where the teachers were trained. But what do we see now? These all bore down to IGF [*Internally Generated Funds*] because government funding has reduced yet the university has to run so there has to be ways of installing other courses all to attract people to come so we make money to run the university. So all the schools have gone into everything, we are scrambling for everything thus we are not focused and consequently jammed up things – we've lost track of the areas of specialty once held. So like I keep asking myself, are we looking for the lost soul or for the lost coin?

Theatre's exposition further reiterates the need for Ghanaian scholarship to interrogate the neoliberal policies from Bretton-Woods institutions. Like Nkrumah (1963) and Fanon (2004) highlight, the policies from these institutions are designed to sustain the colonial exploitative agenda. The need to confront these institutions and their agenda does not seem prominent on

the agenda of Ghanaian universities. Instead, these policies are rationalized and implemented but as Theatre suggests, going to the basics would be a path worth taking.

## **Conclusion**

In this chapter, we have been looking at how to inculcate community service oriented values into Ghanaian H.E. Towards this end, respondents were asked the factors that inhibit the attainment of the public purpose in Ghana's H.E despite the prominence of the public purpose in traditional African education, Ghana's national anthem and the anthem of University of Ghana. The respondents mentioned political intimidation, society's unreceptiveness towards universities, institutional challenges, the ivory tower mentality of universities, and greed as factors inhibiting universities achieving the public purpose. To translate the privilege of H.E into a sense of responsibility requires the need to establish a connection between society and H.E, students' awareness of African oppression and the need for emancipation.

Specifically addressing how community service oriented values can be inculcated into Ghanaian universities, respondents encouraged universities to shelve the false sense of elitism and create avenues for society to interact and contribute to its activities. Other respondents suggested that the orientation towards community service oriented values is present but requires restructuring to ensure utmost benefits. Overall, the respondents recommended localisation of Ghana's universities, which is therefore centred on solving societal problems.

As discussed in Chapter Two and further in Chapter Ten, European expansionism, colonialism and the introduction of Western education in Africa conferred an unpleasant outlook on Africans. "Blackness" has thus been associated with unkind signs and symbols that continues to afflict Africans worldwide. The next chapter will present an analysis and discussion as to how African pride can be restored in Ghanaian H.E.

## **Section Four: Empirical Aspects of the Study**

### **Chapter Eight: Restoring African Pride**

#### **Introduction**

As highlighted in the theoretical framework, the African struggles from 16<sup>th</sup> century revolution in Haiti (led by Toussaint Louverture (L'Ouverture) and Jean-Jacques Dessalines) to 19<sup>th</sup> century wars in Ghana (led by Yaa Asantewaa) were against European imperialism, enslavement and colonialism. The activities of the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) by Marcus Garvey in 1914 pushed for Africans to find pride in their “Blackness” while Negritude by Aimé Césaire and Leopold Sedar Senghor promoted African cultural identity during the 1930s to 1940s. As Fanon (2004) illustrates, the colonial agenda was framed as protecting Africans from their worst nature. Hoskins (1992), Clarke (1970), and Asante (1999) highlight how Africa’s history has been distorted in European scholarship to confer notions of inferiority to Africans – further light is shone on these in Chapter Ten. Furthermore, Nkrumah (1963) points to the extensive and less transparent psychological effects of colonialism on Africans, contributing to self-hate and acceptance of being “destined” to be in servitude to Europeans. Nkrumah (1997e) therefore advocates for a study of Africa from the African perspective.

Simmons and Dei’s (2012) anti-colonial theory suggests the need to confront and resist the promotion of European hegemony as the solitary means of generating, validating and disseminating knowledge. Given that H.E in Ghana is built on the pre-eminence of Europe with little or no pride to the African, it becomes important to find means of offering some esteem to the Ghanaian. The focus of this chapter is to present an analysis and discussion of responses on how African pride can be restored in Ghana’s H.E.

#### **The Desire to Internationalise**

When I asked King how African pride can be restored in Ghanaian H.E, he indicated how the schooled African tends to seek European validation. He argues that adopting and adapting European concepts and phenomenon would not find consonance in African spaces:

When the African says international recognition it means Western Europe and so on. How do you bring a British constitution into an African space – it won't work. It puts chiefs aside and those sorts of things. We keep passing on this European created false sense of inferiority and I mean, it's crazy!

As discussed in Chapter Four, the University of Ghana, for instance, offers factors such as “staff experience and mobility, student experience and mobility, international research needs, teaching to international standards, and attitudes and perceptions” as the basis to internationalise (UG, 2015). However, Sawyerr (2004) states that internationalisation of early universities in Ghana/Africa meant imitating European universities. Considering Council-Chair's position, I sought to elicit from him the possible motives behind the urge of Ghanaian universities to internationalise. In response, Council-Chair indicates a clash of worldviews in Ghanaian universities that consisted of dominant Eurocentric perspectives dominating belittled African outlooks. The dominance of Eurocentric worldviews in Ghanaian universities drives the need to seek validation from Europe thus the quest for internationalisation:

The university is made up of all kinds of people with all kinds of ideas. What for the lack of a better word I'll call the politics of knowledge – so there are competing systems of knowledge. The dominant one for a long time is that when you talk of knowledge, hey, what does Africa have to offer, nothing. But for some of us, it's just a great deception, self-deception – it started as deception and it has become self-deception. If that was the solution, we wouldn't be where we are today because we've been going down that road for the best part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and we were just sinking deeper and deeper the level of development. We were manufacturing hard liquor before the “Whites” came but our hard liquor became illicit gin and if you are caught with a bottle you end up in cell. Why? Because the colonial people want to bring in their whiskeys. There is in some ways a regression when it comes to development that even in the early days, things that we could do for ourselves we cannot do any more.

To drive home his point on the scale of deterioration in Ghana, Council-Chair cites a case of how the early physicians educated in Ghana bore patriotic values and expertise comparable to any worldwide. However, these values seem to elude contemporary products of Ghanaian universities:

The Ghana medical school – the first batch of doctors, everyone would testify, they were judged to be world class and most of their professors were Ghanaians. Today, we still produce some pretty good but something is missing in their training. That first generation, the professional knowledge came with a certain thing, an old fashion thing now that we called patriotism, nationalism. That’s not there anymore so the day you take your vows, you already have a ticket, you are on your way out and if you are here then you spend a lot of time organising strikes to ask for more privileges.

Council-Chair’s claim that contemporary physicians in Ghana seem to lack nationalistic attributes supports the case I make in Chapter Twelve that some members of professional groups in Ghana like nurses, teachers and physicians perform their services half-heartedly as if it is a favour they are giving to society. Furthermore, Council-Chair’s answer corresponds with Nkrumah’s (1973c) assertion about how the highly schooled Ghanaian’s are conditioned with a high sense of entitlement. Council-Chair’s comparison of different groups of physicians also indicates how prevailing realities or consciousness at specific times are likely to influence specific awareness, attitudinal inclinations, and agency. For instance, Council-Chair says early physicians educated in Ghana between the mid-to-late 1960s had nationalistic attitudes. It is worth mentioning that the stated period was an era of intense anti-colonial sentiment in Ghana so such consciousness was bound to be a natural consequence. However, in this contemporary era, postcolonial/post-independence persuasions and the privileging of Western influences through globalisation and neoliberal forces are bound to increase individualism. It is for such a reason that Smith (2012) argues that the lack of awareness of the continuous nature of colonialism justifies the deceptive nature of the notions of post-colonialism that suggests an end to colonialism.

Given Council-Chair’s focus on medicine, I shared my surprise when I found out that the “father of medicine” was Imhotep in Kemit (ancient Egypt). It is thus strange that there is a Hippocratic Oath in honour of Hippocrates. When I asked if this could be because Hippocrates was the father of Western medicine, Council-Chair interjected, saying:

Even what is Western medicine and where does it begin? In the area of engineering, if you haven’t visited Egypt, one day go and visit the sites and see the miracle levels to which they took engineering, architecture, mathematical calculations. No, nothing that exists in the world today compares to that, and it was a product of an African line of



development, which eventually opened up to inputs from other parts of the world. Whether it was in philosophy, the Greeks came to school in Africa and went back home. Pythagoras was in Egypt for eight years or so and went back with a formula, he goes home and teaches it and it becomes the Pythagoras formula or whatever.

I asked why more ancient civilisations are abandoned in Ghana's universities because as a Level 100 student of Classical History and Civilisation, we only studied Greece and Rome. Besides, are lecturers also ignorant of Africa's many ancient civilisations? Council-Chair avers that some lecturers experienced severe systems of indoctrination hence they teach what they know:

Some of them maybe were ignorant because they may not have gone through preparatory schools like you. They went through situations that were worse than the modern preparatory school – they went to mission schools where you were under constant surveillance even during vacations.

Demonstrating how this sort of indoctrination is difficult to extinguish and potentially inhibits infusing Africa's past civilisations in university teaching, Council-Chair argues:

They were trained to block out African's participation in ancient civilisations.

Council-Chair alleged that in order to make extinct ancient African influence world scholarship, the content of some ancient literature was manipulated to deny Africa's influence. Council-Chair mentions that texts were doctored during their translation from Greek to English:

You see the guy who wrote this book, Theophile Obenga [*Linguist and Egyptologist*], I invited him once to Northwestern University, while I was there as a visiting professor under the African Humanities Project. He warned me before he arrived; I'm not coming to make any theoretical things so you see the mathematical things here, I just want to come and show the testimonies of the ancient Greek scholars themselves. So he'll show an original text from say Plato, there were classical scholars there as well, so he will say, I think this is what the text means and if I'm wrong someone should correct me – and they'll say he's correct. Then he would pick a text from the standard translation so-

called, which is being used in the universities as standard textbooks and supposed to be translation of Plato. But in the original one, he'll write and give a source, say, from the priest in Egypt in Africa. In the so-called standard translation, wherever Egypt or Africa occurred, it was blacked out, it was omitted.

Council-Chair's allegations supports Hoskins' (1992) accusation of Europe's centuries of historical distortion, Clarke's (1970) charge of European amnesia on Africa, and Asante's (1996) complaint about replacing Latin hegemony with Europe. Furthermore, Asante (2007a) contends that the goal was to propel "European supremacy" and make Africans object to their own history and to "shed her blackness as a badge of inferiority" (p. 80). Nkrumah's (1963) elucidation on the negative psychological effects of colonialism and European literature on the African permeate the attitudes of Council-Chair's colleagues.

Prescribing measures to reverse indoctrination, Council-Chair states that the creation of awareness has been there, although it is yet to galvanise into a movement and might take another generation to accomplish. However, the church is a threat to this cause because it drafts scholars and immerses them in its activities and this tends to neutralise their African centeredness:

That process has already started, it has not really consolidated into a movement that will firmly and broadly replace the Eurocentric approach to H.E. It has gone far in some universities and in some departments but it's at different levels in different disciplines. What we need is a push for consolidating it and redefining our curriculum broadly with a clear sense of direction but it's going to take at least another generation. The danger here now is the way in which the church has come back in strong so that we have relatively young professors who are very knowledgeable in their disciplines and are aware of the African intellectual tradition. But they will not give it a decisive push because at the same time they have been recaptured by this new evangelical movement, which plays down the value of African agency. For me, that's the new danger. Too many of our colleagues have bought into it thus cannot be counted upon for anything meaningful. There was a period when this was part of the foreign policy objective of the United States. That every year, they would produce and send out to targeted areas of the world at least 2500 or whatever, so-called evangelists. They were the ones who came in and recruited the young people into and started programmes of inducement,

scholarships and the chance to go to the U.S, and within one generation they turn things around. The Akan people say once you grab the head of the snake, the rest is just a rope.

Asked if the situation had persisted because it threatens the prevailing structures of privilege, Council-Chair concurs, saying:

Yes, that's why people will listen to what you are saying. They might even grudgingly agree with you that may be you are right but hey, they won't put in any meaningful effort.

### **Pride in the African Self**

Commenting on how to restore African pride in Ghana's H.E, Theatre advocates for academic engagements in Ghanaian universities to focus on African realities that propel the African personality. Currently in most Ghanaian universities, there is a one-semester compulsory course in African studies at Level 200 that students need to pass in order to graduate. Theatre thinks this is insufficient. There is the need to boost the image of African studies through the provision of better infrastructure such as studios and theatres to educate students. Currently, the nature of African studies across Ghanaian universities is insufficient:

How do we place our priorities, is it on the other courses which will bring money or the liberal courses that will put the Africanness into our students – are we looking at these? Students who have registered for African studies – dance – have their practical under trees. About 100 to 300 students being managed by one person and they are dancing over there [*pointing outside*]. How can they even be interested or be conscious and take pride in the African studies? The focus is not on how to make people Africans – to learn African values, No! Rather, it seems more like some extracurricular activity with the notion and desire to just pass and complete university because that's the requirement. So African studies that hold the tendency to inculcate the Africanness into students is not taken seriously therefore people finish school and don't know their values.

Touching on the prevailing ignorance of African heritage, Theatre goes on to divulge that his research on the knowledge of traditional Ghanaian symbols in university emblems revealed the ignorance of both academics and students. Theatre proposes renewed exertions into Africa's

rich heritage to propel Ghana's development:

I recently did a study on the cultural heritage in H.E institutions and I used University of Ghana as my case study. I relied on the traditional symbols that have been used as logos; the University of Ghana has two of them – Aya and Dwemeinmen. Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology has four of them but the main one is the nyansakpo [*wisdom knot*], wo saninu ba-dwen-ba [*you use wisdom to untie it*]. Cape Coast has the Gye Nyame [*except God*]; Winneba has Mati mesieh [*what I hear I disseminate*]. When I interviewed people on this campus, even the school's anthem, people don't know. Students don't know, lecturers don't know, so who are we? What makes us Africans is to think about ourselves and our own technologies. We are producing students who are half Europeans, half Africans and are confused in the middle and do not know what to do.

Even within the African studies we need to interrogate whether they are maintaining the African idea. For all these years, we are still learning about Shakespeare instead of bringing Shakespeare home to identify the themes that he uses and relate with it. For all these years, we are still not using plays written by Ghanaians/Africans to enhance them, we still are bringing outside plays over here. So we have not really been able to Africanise our courses.

Theatre remarks on the much talked about phenomenon, Sankofa. The notion of Sankofa can be situated theoretically to this study. It prescribes a reversion to the best of the past. It aligns with Negritude, a literary and ideological philosophy in the 1930s that projected a shared collective ethnic identity of Africans globally. It also encompasses the Harlem renaissance, which propelled African American literature, music, art and politics into mainstream American culture. It also includes anti-colonial theory's insistence for African cultural advancement, as discussed in Chapter Two. Theatre sees Sankofa as a paradox because literally, it calls for a return to the past; however, it is futuristic because it redirects present trajectories. Reverting to the past is to rethink the present path. It is an expensive venture yet necessary for African agency:

We talk of Sankofa – the idea of going back to our roots – not going back to our roots and take everything – we take the meaningful things. Sankofa is even futuristic, because

Sankofa is an instruction – go and take it. African values should be inculcated from an early age. Sankofa too will be very expensive because if you leave something behind and you are going to take it, it could cost more.

Playwrights, for instance, should use African names and characters in their plays and stories – this helps in the preservation of the African identity so as not to lose touch with them.

Furthermore, Theatre encourages universities to establish organic relationships with society to harness African pride. As it stands, society seems to doubt the relevance of universities due to a lack of interaction:

How to even communicate our research findings to the man in the street is a problem. We need to localise things in the university; we need to let the ordinary person understand what we are doing in the university. Language comes in here, songs are created, poems, drama and the rest. Unfortunately, we are not being recognised by the masses as helping them so when we come down to the masses and use desirable languages and other means to communicate with them, they'll see our relevance. The ivory tower mentality should be changed and not feel we are above society.

To Reverend, history should be a vehicle to raise consciousness of students. However, important courses in Ghanaian universities that offer a path to emancipation are disregarded – a position shared by Theatre and Council-Chair. Teaching practices and methodologies should move from the classroom to society in order to:

Find awareness and consciousness-raising techniques – history is very important. Here, if you study history and archaeology, you are a backwater student but those are the subjects that will make you know who you are so for me, if there should be any compulsory subjects, these should be the compulsory subjects.

Science that is taught theoretically in a lab should be stopped. The science is already in the African societies and communities – take the students out of the classroom and take them to the field. If it is grasscutters you want, teach them how to grow grasscutters. If it is medicine you would want to extract, after they have studied all the theories let a herbalist in the village be a professor, resource person or facilitators to the students.

Find a means of extracting all the knowledge, documenting it, protecting it as a patent for the people from whom you got these things. That's very important so the learning and teaching methodologies must also change, radically change but you know, people are so comfortable that they don't want things changed.

It is important to add that the history needed should be African-centred offering interpretations from African perspectives. Further, the much neglected oral history must be given a space in universities in order to be enhanced. The desire to conserve European approaches reflects in the resistance and apathy by some university authorities to change. Reverend shares the obstacles he faced in his attempt to emphasise fieldwork as a method of teaching and learning:

When I tried to take students out of the classroom into the field, I was severely criticised by the university, the Registrar had to come to my office, the Pro-Vice Chancellor also came to interview me and finally said let's go for lunch. They saw a really powerful methodological paradigm shift from the classroom to the community. We can teach better in the field than in the classroom. When the education is taken out of the classroom to the society then that sense of responsibility would come. Besides, there are very knowledgeable people in society who have not been schooled.

Commenting on languages, Reverend finds contemptible the promotion of foreign languages at the expense of local languages:

My son was in class 3 when I left Ghana for Germany and they sent him to kindergarten in Germany. I got so furious and I said why? They said, he can't speak German and I said ooooh, okay, so when you also come to Ghana we'll send you to class 1 to learn Twi. I came back and Twi was not on the timetable for class 1 or 2. I felt so bad but the Germans are keeping their language and language is a very powerful tool for the formation of concepts and transfer of knowledge. We need to sit up!

I indicated to Reverend that Ghana is very multilingual hence quite difficult to adopt a lingua franca. However, to him, dominant languages in different communities should form the mode of instruction in school, cautioning that it should not hinder the study of European languages:

We don't need a lingua franca, we need a community franca. If you come to Jasikan

[*town in Ghana*] for example, Jasikan is a mixed ethnic grouping, you meet the Leleni speakers who are the natives, they are Guans [*ethnic group*]. Underneath them we have the Hausa, we have Kotokoli, we have Basari, we have the Ewe, we have the Ewe Anlo, we have at least about 10 different ethnic groups there. They are moving on well and it is in some few instances that some people wouldn't want to learn other people's languages. A school in that location should teach Hausa, Twi, Lelemi, Ewe. This shouldn't stop us from learning English and French because they are our enemies.

Reverend further encourages Ghanaian students to learn the best of the West and use local consciousness to draw the benefits therein:

Learn all about what the colonialist imperialist formal education would want to teach but apply it consciously. Be selective and sieve it and look around for what is available in your locality and begin to integrate it and repackage and reconstruct for the benefit of the local people.

Council-Chair based the fruition of African pride in an organic connection with society, insisting that achieving community service oriented values is fundamental for African pride. Council-Chair illustrates how traditional knowledge and skills in farming have been utilised by the Anlo people [*ethnic group*] to ensure food security in their community, as a case to support his suggestion that African knowledge systems must be the foundation of Ghana's H.E. This would establish a relationship between universities and society:

Look at the little experiment, some people will call it an experiment but it is not an experiment – what the Anlo people did on that little stretch of land, the middle stretch of land in the Anloga [*a town in Ghana*] area. The system they developed there, just one single strip was able to produce a cycle of food that they depend on. From one harvest to the next for three years without exhausting the nutrients in the sand in three years – there is a scientific basis to that, for those who have studied it. The people figured that if we just grow sabala [*onion*] continuously for three to four years, you'll exhaust the land so in between growing sabala, you grow some particular crops, beans among them, they have a way of regenerating the soil. Fortunately, water is just a little below. I also cite the example of agriculture in the northern part of the Volta region based on the principle of variety in crop cultivation rather than mono cropping. We

bought into the idea of mono cropping from Europe and abandoned our traditional ways and spend a bigger chunk of our investment in agriculture on this one crop that we don't eat, for which we don't have markets that is under our control [*cocoa*] – we have seen the results for ourselves.

To strengthen his assertions on the need for African pride, Council-Chair recommends a comprehensive synchronisation of Ghana's development activities just as Nkrumah did in the 1960s. Fragmented means of tackling Ghana's challenges have no meaningful futuristic outcomes:

At the time Nkrumah was setting up the Institute of African Studies, he was at the same time setting up the Academy of Arts and Sciences, the Atomic Energy Commission. He was laying down the medical school, they all came into being about the same time. What we are doing now is tackling everything in bits and pieces – no, that will not move us. You need a comprehensive programme of development and each side is supporting the other side and that's really what it would take.

Council-Chair also cites the push for Genetically Modified Food in Ghana as a threat to the drive for African agency:

You see where some of the danger is coming from? That sense of privilege and ownership. So they are more interested in this debate about Genetically Modified Food because that gives them ownership and control, they are more interested in that.

They are not thinking of how to take the traditional varieties and how they can multiply it but how to own a generation of new seeds on which they have patent. That's the direction we are moving in and if we go on that road, we'll forever depend on food from wherever. Why does anybody, our agricultural scientist need to own patent on seeds that give us food? Why is that a priority?!

Council-Chair's discomfort with some Ghanaian scholars' advocacy for Genetically Modified Organisms has been grounded theoretically in the study. Nkrumah (1963) states that multinational corporations will be the institutions sustaining the colonial agenda after political independence in Africa. Fanon (2004) also cautions the colonised to be wary of these



multinational corporations because their successes and survival depend on exploitation and impoverishing the “third-world”. Given that food is a potent weapon to control people, the agenda of organisations like Monsanto to own and distribute food seedlings must awaken any conscious Ghanaian/African. This reiterates the position of Council-Chair and me that scientific ventures, without knowledge of history and world politics, is dangerous. Furthermore, this situation justifies Reverend, Pan-Africanist and King’s recommendation for African history from African perspectives to be made compulsory in universities.

Council-Chair advocates for the reclamation of African traditions in all disciplines in Ghanaian universities. Universities need to be immersed in these reservoirs of African knowledge through collaborations with society in order to become relevant:

I have seen it in my own little work as a creative artist. If I had gone stuck with what I was taught in this department, today I wouldn’t be able to write one poem that anybody would like to listen to. It was not until I tapped into this rich heritage that has been there for me going back to my grandfather and beyond my grandfather. Once I embraced it, that’s it. It’s up to people in agriculture to do the same thing, people in medical science should do the same thing, people in governance – how did our people govern themselves? In the Anlo area, it’s one principle – *edum3nor efia gbor efia e nor dugbor* [*a society does not preside over a King, it is a King who presides over a society*]. If we all understand that, we should be okay. We might not be totally happy that one person or one family is always the chief but if they are doing the right thing by us why should we want them to go to hell? There are models that our own people have developed in the past. The methods that produced yams in the past, how do we improve them so they can provide enough to feed a larger population? Rather, we opt for chemical fertilizers and when you harvest three or four seasons then the soil is gone to waste.

I mentioned the importance of science; however, ignorance of politics therein may lead people to create things that would end up destroying them. In response, Council-Chair says:

Yes, that is the danger. Pursuit of scientific knowledge without a humanistic perspective, you create those creatures in *Star Wars*, robots, they are like machines and they are on a mission of destruction. Scientific development without a humanistic

perspective, it's better if it doesn't develop at all because it will develop into something that will become a threat to life. The practice where doctors are used by pharmaceutical companies to prescribe their drugs and are subsequently rewarded. It's a top secret in the medical world. They have a system that tells the number of prescriptions you have made and at the end of the month they send some money into your account or send you a cheque. And it is a top secret among them.

Council-Chair reveals that some African dances have therapeutic elements. They help cure menstrual pains and these multifaceted qualities of African dance amazes students:

Students are quite excited to discover that there are a few health challenges which are actually cured through African dance. They say really! The female students especially. I say let's try it; how many of you experience menstrual monthly pains? They say yes, some of them are embarrassed to show up and I say, okay if you have it and don't feel like it just keep quiet but let's try these dances and see whether they'll happen to you again this month or next month. But we've been made to think that African dance is a joke – I was the one who made a case for it to become a department and a degree programme and when I proposed it people were laughing.

Educator states that Ghanaians should not continue to blame the “White man” for Africa's predicaments. Instead, Ghanaians who display a sense of inferiority camouflaged as superiority and elitism must be held accountable as they sustain the status quo because they gain from it. There is the need for change:

We can't still continue to blame colonialism or the “White man's” school, what are we doing now? Even in the absence of the “White man”, there was some form of schooling though it may not have been elaborate. And if the “White man” hadn't come, that form of schooling would have also evolved. So, the failure to upgrade our system, to change it from the “White man's” conception of schooling they brought in order to control us shouldn't be blamed on any other person but ourselves. But it is so because some people are benefiting from it, they think it is the best and seduced into it. Which in itself is an inferiority complex.

According to Pan-Africanist, the African does not see the bigger picture. However, when they get the opportunity to go to the West and are hounded because of their “Blackness” then they realise it is beyond their ethnicity and nationality. It is much deeper:

Often continental Africans do not start to become Africans until they go abroad. Before that they think they are Ewe, Fanti, Ashanti [*ethnic groups*]; even smaller than that, they think I’m Anlo [*ethnic group*], you are that and whatever but once they go abroad, they may get arrested because they are black – no one is asking what is your ethnic whatever, they don’t even know where Ghana is. That’s when they realise we are in this together, that is how the battle lines are drawn.

Knowledge of Self, knowledge of enemy and behaviour that correlates with these knowledges. If you know this, what are you supposed to do about it – what are you supposed to wear, what are you supposed to eat, what are you supposed to do in all areas.

Pan-Africanist notes the negativity associated with Africa plays subliminally on Ghanaian students. This view aligns with the “White man’s burden” to civilise the world mentioned by Fanon (2004) and Biney (2008). Pan-Africanist encourages the use of Africa’s history, past and present successes, and inventions as a means to dissuade such thoughts and reorient students:

When we first get into the class, I ask them what do you think of when you think of Africa. Poverty, corruption, you know, everything you can think of – that’s where the warlord is, wars, famine – then I say I’m surprised you all didn’t mention writing – because we invented writing – and I’ll actually write in Medu Neter [*ancient Kemit (Egyptian) language and script*] on the board and they’ll say wow!

I’m surprised you didn’t mention mathematics and I’ll give them examples of mathematics. I’ll say I’m surprised you didn’t mention science and I’ll give them examples of these different things and actual human personalities who did this. So by the time we are in like the first week, they ask how come we didn’t learn this from kindergarten? And that’s powerful because those are the ones going to make decisions in the future because those making decisions now know nothing and we already know where that leads us – to dumsor [*power outages*], bad roads, to the floods. If you know

what not knowing anything will get you, at least knowing something can't get you anything worse than you are in now. So I influence the students I can reach and with a bigger sphere, I can make a bigger impact.

The need to cultivate an effective knowledge base to influence critical thought to confront the prevailing dominant negative episteme on Africans becomes paramount. Pan-Africanist indicates that it is important for students to have knowledge of Self because its consequences are worthwhile in restoring African pride in Ghana's H.E. It is crucial to have:

Knowledge of Self because they [*students*] also have this view that Europeans brought civilisation. Then I pose a question (to the students) that civilisation or barbarous acts? Then I give them examples of Léopold in Belgium, Trotta in Namibia – the first holocaust. About Tasmania – Truganini – the very last one [*Tasmanian*] who was there, the Arawaks, and these make them question how are these people are going to bring civilisation when they haven't become civilised yet. How are they going to bring writing when the British have never developed a writing system to date? The French have never developed a writing system to date when we had writing systems all over the continent.

There is a quote that I cite by Rashidi Ronuko: what we do for ourselves depends on what we know of ourselves; what we know of ourselves depends on what we think of ourselves, and what we think of ourselves depends on what we have been told.

So if you see inaction or inappropriate action, you can trace that as a logical consequence of not being told anything about yourself, not thinking good about yourself.

Pan-Africanist further adds that restoring African pride depends on an amalgamation of the knowledge, skills and attitudes amongst Africans worldwide. By so doing, there would be a rich pool of knowledge and expertise to tap into and disseminate instead of the current inclination to look to Europe:

Coming from the perspective of African Studies, one thing I see is that you have something like intellectual incest – we have people who have this very small pool of ideas, very small worldview. What I would love to see is that we have Africans with a

level of consciousness all over the world: Africans from Brazil with the African mindset and worldview, Africans from Britain, the U.S, from Australia – the indigenous people there. The black people of Melanesia, you get scholars from there that is actually when you would have African Studies because you have all these variance and ideas coming to the table. The challenge, however, is how to woo somebody to come when the salary is not good. But if you have people who in the face of that would come, those are the people who have the principles and are serious. I would like to see also Africans from Zimbabwe, South Africa, Senegal, that's how you can change the status quo.

We think to be African is to be what we already are instead of an ideal to strive to know more about the global African world, instead of this is what I do in my village and so on.

Pan-Africanist identifies a dissimilarity between African and European constructs of the human being. While African worldviews seeks to nurture humanity with the belief that the individual can achieve their full potential, the European worldview pushed through Christianity has a self-limiting and unworthy outlook on Africans. Therefore, when systems of education are shaped by these perspectives, they are bound to be dissimilar outcomes. Africans must advance their perspective to gain respect because it is the basis for an African resurgence in the world. Ghana therefore needs to create a H.E system to meet this end:

An African concept of the human being – to say that this person is a human being is to say this person is the ideal whereas the European concept is that I make mistake, I am fallible blah blah blah; I have original sin and evil – all those alienation types of terms. The African concept is helping people to achieve the highest potential. So first of all, there has to be a concerted attempt to create an education system because there isn't one yet, there is a system of schooling.

Different systems are not working for us but we keep to it, religion etc. We are still in the 1741 point where we didn't know anything about the "White man" – are they our friends or enemies, we don't know. Until the African gains respect in world affairs, no African anywhere will be respected. So it's important to have that broader worldview. Here, oftentimes, people have the view that coming to the university is the most European thing that they can do. Another major challenge is those who have all the

knowledge yet do not have the corresponding behaviour to demonstrate their knowledge. With all the knowledge they go and do the same things as those who haven't got the knowledge. People see consciousness as achievement on its own so neglect or ignore the behavioural change needed.

Pan-Africanist, Theatre, Council-Chair, and Educator's assertions concur with Clarke's (1970) prescriptions for Africans to look at history from an African standpoint and to revert to African tradition. Similarly, Nkrumah (1973c) suggests that Ghanaian and African H.E imbue knowledge of the Self and awareness of imperialists. While Nyerere (1975) on his part promotes the need for university education in Tanzania and Africa to liberate the educated by enhancing their humanity, Asante (1996) says it is crucial for Africans to centre themselves in human affairs and not see themselves on the margins of world history. Scholars like Nsamenang (2004), Marah (2006), and Letseka (2000) also emphasise the need for African culture to shape H.E in Africa in order to make education meaningful. Overall, the call for a reclamation of the worthy aspects of the past concurs with Dei's (2006) position that it is fundamental to decolonisation.

I asked Pan-Africanist whether the prevailing realities are due to the fact that being critical does not reward materially like being sycophantic. Pan-Africanist offers a response similar to Reverend's earlier comment that African politicians walk on a tightrope. Pan-Africanist provides parables to highlight Western political manoeuvring and agendas to make sure there are no African successes:

The idea of the wretched free man and the contented slave – it's the same. Artificial selection as opposed to natural selection. Artificial selection: for instance when you are breeding sheep, so say these ones don't get aggressive, these ones get fat so these are the ones that I'm going to allow to breed whereas those other ones I'm going to let them die or I'll kill them myself. This is where Africans are at. The white-world terror domination and the Euro-Asian hegemony. On the plantation, the one who tries to fight for independence is the one to be used as example for everybody else, for everyone to get in line. They reward the one who is completely against being African. They decide who to reward for insanity and who to punish for sanity. So Kwame Nkrumah, Sankara, Patrice Lumumba were all killed off. There is a Yoruba proverb that the one who falls in a pit teaches everyone wisdom.

Haiti got free but had to pay reparation to France for many years in many million dollars. Europeans have a very long memory and hold grudges. We can't have a single example of African success thrive. We have to make sure that basically no African goes unpunished and basically this is what we are dealing with.

The worldview of the average schooled African is like that of a high school student – all they see is that the buck stops at the headmaster's desk – they don't see the school board, Ministry of Education etc. We think we are architects of our trajectory because we are blind or refuse to see that some other people are mapping our course. We thought we overthrew Nkrumah but it was the handiwork of the CIA. So until you can see the broader picture you think the buck stops with the president. This is the global battle line and once we can come together then we can give a push.

Pan-Africanist's claims are indicative of my study's theoretical framework. They resonate with Rawlings' (2013) exposition that Western powers interfere and orchestrate coup d'état in some instances in African countries. It also sheds light on the concerns raised by Fanon (2004) and Nkrumah (1970b) on the need for awareness of colonial and neo-colonial forces and agents. Pan-Africanist's comments further align with the anti-colonial theory's call for deeper interrogation of the colonial to understand the extended notions it asserts (Simmons and Dei, 2012).

King echoes Pan-Africanist's perspectives, reemphasising his earlier statement for Ghanaians/Africans to shun operating in European paradigms and to instead revert to ancestral knowledge. The basis for most European perspectives on Africa is not to promote African agency and restitution of African pride lies in:

Reorienting the university to pick up African foundations. African foundations have rarely been formalised but they are there. You are taught but the school takes that teaching thing away from the foundations. The question therefore is how is society organised? That organisation must be taken to the university. What are the various structures within society? It must be taken into the university. For instance, why don't we take the family system into the university? It shouldn't be one ethnic group's but the inner workings of the African family system.

I, for example, kept reading Europeans saying that some societies are centralised others are non-centralised and all these things. I did my thesis on the Ora in Nigeria – it was when I was doing my thesis that I understood my own society and how it works so I would not have written that it is a non-centralised society. They have the same system we have just that there's only slight differences. They won't have a monarchy but they know who the first son of the village is and that line continues. He is given special treatments however, the elders of the various families come together to form the village. We do the same thing just that the eldest line is taken as the chief who actually has no power because the various families come together to form council. The chief can't do anything; for anything to be done, a family meeting would have to be called for decisions to be made and a role delegated – so it was just a democratic system right through.

King advises schooled Africans to desist from functioning on the realities of Europeans because they lack meaningful agency. The seemingly pervasive ignorance in society requires a reversion to African roots for harmony, and courses like History and Psychology must be compulsory. These are the ways the African pride can be restored in H.E:

The Asante [*ethnic group*] who've gone to school today reads this (Rattery's work) and takes it even to court thinking that it is their society but it is not, it is the "White man's" conception of their society at a particular period in time. So for me, we need to go back to the basics of who we are; how do we want to bring who we are into the university. We don't sing Asafo [*traditional army*] songs, we don't sing all kinds of songs – on the radio stations it is all about America and now Azonto [*a kind of Afrobeat genre*]. But nobody is going to play your classical music if you don't learn them. This is part of the imperialism but tell the radio stations now and they'll tell you, you are crazy and it is also filled with NDC-NPP [*National Democratic Congress – New Patriotic Party (political parties)*].

We've all been indoctrinated by the West but so long as we realise the wrongness of what we are being taught then we have a problem, how do we survive this? A law was brought into this country in 1876 when the British imposed their law on us, what have I got to do with it? If they are going, they should take their law with them. Yet, we train a whole lot of people who call themselves lawyers and that's how they live and how do



we change it? Like the Western elites, the lords and so on kept away from the common class. It is a similar thing university attempts to do but you don't train a dog to be a cat!

Certain subjects must be compulsory irrespective of whether you are doing Science or what. History and Psychology must be compulsory and it's your own history.

The expositions by King are situated within anti-colonial theory's call for colonised people to generate and develop knowledge production and validation (Simmons & Dei, 2012). Furthermore, the comments concur with Marcus Garvey and Nkrumah's call for Africans to be self-determining.

King further states that the allegories of Ananse [*Akan's (Ghanaian ethnic group) folklore on the spider*] were a means of self-determination, self-sufficiency and looking within to address challenges:

Ananse is simply about thinking and to think. Never give your mind to anybody; as soon as you give your mind to somebody you are finished!

Elsewhere, King proffers that living within the dictates of Ghanaian ethnic or cultural tenets enhances a person's humanity. However, when a person lacks a deeper understanding of the dictates of their ethnicity, their humanity is limited and they thus focus and push their ethnicity as a basis:

If you are really Ewe [*ethnicity*], you realise your humanity but when your Ewe is limited that's when you think you are Ewe but the whole structure of being Ewe is to display your spirituality – to take you to God. That you follow this, you follow that, you see; this is the way you behave – it's a structured path. Being Ewe is a religion, being Fante [*ethnicity*] is a religion, being Akwapim [*ethnicity*] is a religion; it ends you up in something we call enyibue, wo enyi ebue – it means your eyes are open – so he has seen God.

Even though King restricts his example to Ghanaian ethnic groups, this outlook can extend to other Africans because of vast cultural parallels present in Africa (Diop in Higgs, 2008) and even broader ethnic classifications. It also corresponds with the spiritual knowing mentioned

in the anti-colonial theory (Simmons & Dei, 2012). Nyerere's (1975) proposition that education must lead to enhancing a person's humanity (education for liberation) is reflected in King's claim.

King encourages Ghanaian universities and scholars to be preoccupied with the knowledge of Self because imitating others is self-destructive. Ghanaians should create their realities and live with them. It is only through this that the community sticks in the mind of students and the university by extension:

A dialogue on who we are, what we are, why we are. When you are under somebody's knowledge hegemony you'll always be down there – you'll never catch up with them.

When somebody says you are underdeveloped, underdeveloped as what? When they say you are developing, developing from what to what? You don't interrogate them, you just accept them since it's not your language and you start using them and you pay a price, nobody defines your world for you.

King's statement serves as a means to generate episteme to confront colonial impositions (Simmons & Dei, 2012). The emphasis on culture concurs with Abubakar's (2011) assertion that the disregard of culture is servitude.

Commenting on how the interplay of political structure and governance blinds Ghanaians from the bigger system of exploitation, King insists that the governance structures are counterproductive, leaving masses to suffer the most:

NDC and NPP [*political parties – National Democratic Congress and New Patriotic Party*] are always clashing and it stops our progress but we are so stupid we don't see the bigger picture. We are caught up in powerless power struggle about how to steal from people. We are not thinking, we are not thinking.

Like Pan-Africanist, King illustrates the threats associated with attempts to confront and resist the colonial structures:

When Kobina Sekyi [*Ghanaian writer, nationalist lawyer and politician*] tried to preach

a different idea, the whites tried to kill him – they coated his plate with poison. Sekyi decided not to talk again.

From the responses, it is evident that until an organic relationship emerges through the inculcation of community service oriented values, the desire to achieve a public purpose and restore African pride would be futile. It is important for H.E in Ghana to reflect Self and be situated in local realities. We can look to Achebe (2012) here, who argues, a “man who does not know where the rain began to beat him cannot say where he dried his body” (p. i). African history becomes the path to identify Africa’s wetness, because it is “a compass that people use to find themselves on the map of human geography” (Clarke, 1970, p. 44). Besides, “a people without the knowledge of their past history, origin and culture is like a tree without roots” (Garvey in Chang, 2006, p. 447). In all, it is important for Ghanaians and Africans to learn to centre themselves in their endeavours in order to proffer their perspectives instead of “willingly or unwillingly, to agree to footnote status in the White Man’s book” (Mazama, 2003, p. 3).

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has presented an analysis and discussion on the restoration of African pride in Ghana’s H.E. The responses indicate competition between African and Western systems of knowledge, with the latter being dominant. The Western system has been sustained and there is apathy towards its conversion due to the privilege attached to it. The tensions arising from these competing systems can be life-threatening, especially to those who push for African consciousness, as has happened in the overthrow of Ghana’s first President, Kwame Nkrumah. Ghanaian society seems ignorant of the activities of cultural imperialism; thus, it tolerates the dictates and ideals of Western media in Ghana’s media sphere. This aligns with the privilege afforded to Western systems of knowledge in universities, which ultimately thwart the creation of African consciousness.

However, the restoration of African pride in Ghana’s H.E requires a study and understanding of African worldviews and African perspectives. There is the need for African systems of knowledge to gain ascendancy in Ghana’s universities, highlight worthy aspects, and synchronize university activities into them, so that universities are shaped by African knowledge systems. Ghanaian scholarship must find value in African culture, and curate knowledge bases and principles and disseminate them. The attainment of community service

oriented values also provides a path to restore African pride. Furthermore, there is the need for a greater emphasis on African studies in Ghanaian universities in order to consolidate knowledge, skills and attitudes among Africans worldwide. This will offer a wealth of knowledge and expertise, effectively confronting the dominant unpleasant ideas about Africans and finding African solutions to African problems. African-centred history should be compulsory for students to help create appropriate African consciousness to understand the basis for the association of Africa with negativity. This will also challenge the present concentration on Western perspectives. Overall, the responses indicate a need for a comprehensive synchronisation of Ghana's socio-economic and political aspirations with traditional African knowledge systems. Universities can serve as a vehicle to make H.E meaningful. It is a H.E system that meets this end that can offer pride to the Ghanaian/African.

The next chapter illustrates an analysis and discussion of responses on alternative means of funding H.E in Ghana, and the future possibilities in spite of the challenges.

## **Section Four: Empirical Aspects of the Study**

### **Chapter Nine: Alternative Means of Funding H.E and Future Possibilities of H.E in Ghana**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter presents an analysis of field data and a discussion on finding alternative means of funding H.E and the future possibilities of H.E in Ghana. The intention of this thesis is not to delve deeply into issues of funding but elicit ideas for an alternative paradigm. Funding has become a crucial component of H.E in Ghana and the emergence of neoliberal policies particularly from the 80s tends to shift the cost of H.E onto students. The cost of university has increased astronomically since the year 2000 when I entered university. The possible dangers associated with this situation is the wealthy minority perpetuating themselves because they have the resources. Accessibility to H.E in Ghana becomes difficult for people from low economic backgrounds, and even if they are able to access H.E, it becomes a business relationship where investments would have to be accrued with interest. This further threatens the need to achieve community service oriented values and the public purpose.

I recognise the tight and tricky situation in which Ghanaian universities find themselves, however, they cannot coil into their shelves in a state of hopelessness. I present the origins of full-fee paying in African/Ghanaian universities; the factors leading to the increasing cost of H.E in Ghana; the materialistic outlook of universities; accountability to society; and the alternative means of funding H.E in Ghana. Furthermore, considering the discussions in this thesis on the historical genealogy of H.E in Ghana and the criticism it has received from influential Africans like Kwame Nkrumah and Julius Nyerere, I enquired on the future possibilities of H.E in Ghana.

#### **The Origins of Full-fee Paying in African Universities**

According to Pro-VC, despite the neoliberal policies that recommended a gradual shift of the cost of H.E from government to students, the near collapse in the late 1980s of Makerere University in Uganda introduced the idea of a full fee-paying policy in Africa. The idea was found to be worthwhile and adopted in Ghana in the early 2000s. However, this has led to an

excessive commercialisation of university education that Pro-VC finds troubling:

Apparently, Makerere University in Uganda had almost collapsed; the pay was so poor, lecturers were using their cars as taxis and couldn't find any better means of making income – the place had really collapsed. So they got together to find a solution; government subvention is too little and when you ask for more, they say that's all we can pay. So what we'll do is to cost how much it'll cost to train one student, factor in government contribution and pass the rest of the cost to students. We can't pretend that university education can still be free, although there are places where it is still free, an example is Ethiopia.

Clearly government cannot give you all the money but I also do not like the suggestion that you should turn your activities into commercial ventures. Total commercialisation is also a problem, because hey, what is the basic purpose of university study – turning your mind to problems.

### **Increasing Cost of H.E in Ghana**

The cost of H.E in Ghana has increased astronomically over the past decade. In spite of the exigencies of neoliberal policies mentioned in Chapter Two and earlier in this chapter, I endeavoured to elicit some information on other possible factors that contribute to the rising cost of H.E. Offering a response, Registrar states that the “unique nature” of universities and meagre resources from government predisposes universities to generate funds internally. Touching on the “uniqueness” of universities, Registrar argues that, unlike other institutions in Ghana, universities bear auxiliary costs – for instance, replacing damaged electricity transformers on campus, competing for highly-skilled professionals, and excessive demands of university senior members:

You see, there are auxiliary responsibilities and costs that the university bears that people are not aware of. Look, when I was Registrar, when university had a power generator blown on campus, we would have to find the money to replace it but in other places, the ECG [*Electricity Company of Ghana*] would fix or change it but we have to do it on our own. If we don't do it, students in Commonwealth Hall or the likes would start to demonstrate and that creates problems. Also, our estate departments and

hospitals need quality staff and we have to compete to get them – these require serious funds. Another problem that leads to the increase in the cost of H.E is the demands of the senior members; they want free healthcare and the like and if you don't provide them then you may lose them. The challenges are enormous and since someone has to pay, we shift them to students.

It escaped me at the time but I should have asked how these professional recruitments contribute to a high operational cost since government pays salaries of staff in public universities. Nevertheless, Educator credits the increasing cost of H.E to Ghanaian universities' unproductivity:

In Ghana, it is because H.E institutions are not productive. That's the main cause, we don't produce anything. The institutions do not pioneer anything in any field to bring in money and are not attached to industry. So the only way is to make students pay more.

Educator's view ties in with Pan-Africanist's earlier suggestion for universities in Ghana to be self-sufficient. However, Pan-Africanist locates the increasing cost of H.E in Ghana to unsustainable models of universities. Also, the desire to shift costs to students, failure to produce tangible things, and the craving to imitate and meet Western prescriptions contributes to the deficiency:

Universities are running models that are unsustainable so they are now trying to pass it on to the students, or going for north-south partnerships or let's go round begging whereas you wouldn't have to beg if you were doing things right. We are running models that are flawed and aspiring to make it world class, whatever that means. They are not producing anything concrete.

To Council-Chair, Ghanaian universities are not producing "useable knowledge". Universities are too theoretical in approach and detached from reality:

We are running programmes here that are disconnected from the real world of work. Repeating theoretical statements, copying passages from some people's books and reading it to our students to play back to us. Neither the professor nor the student is

generating any useable knowledge that anybody would like to pay for. That's why H.E is so expensive. We are waiting for funds to drop like manna.

Council-Chair's call for Ghanaian universities to desist from "repeating theoretical statements, copying passages...to our students to play back to us" gives credence to my contention that several aspects of my schooling experience were non-representational and irrelevant. It further supports the position that H.E in Africa is detached from life (Higgs, 2003), and not based on African perspectives (Avoseh, 2013).

### **Alternative Means of Funding H.E in Ghana**

Suggesting alternative means of funding H.E in Ghana, Council-Chair recommends universities generate useable knowledge that has relevance in society. There is also the need to adopt practical approaches to H.E because universities must be:

Structured as to be engaged in the production of useable knowledge. It may not be knowledge that can be used today but if there is every demonstration that it is guiding the production of knowledge that would be used in the future. There are ways of demonstrating this and for that there is no shortage of funding, and if we turn in those directions then we don't even have to wait for support from outside. Local industries can support some of that and they are ready to do it. Now the technical schools are doing Commerce, Business courses but when technical schools were technical schools and you go to become an auto-electrician, you are repairing people's cars. If you are into furniture you are learning and in the process producing fine furniture that can go right on the market.

Council-Chair's spotlight on Business courses in Ghana's universities restates the preferred mindset toward H.E. However, it is important to mention that university education in Ghana was to escape so-called "dirty jobs", as discussed in Chapter Four, hence such occupations are shunned. For the colonised, as Simmons and Dei (2012) prescribe in their anti-colonial theory, it is important to query promises of universities to identify and subvert colonial and re-colonising schemes therein. It is important because universities are among the guises that colonial relations can perpetuate themselves. Therefore, while a case can be made for "market-driven courses" in universities, it is equally important to also contemplate whether these



courses operate as means to lubricate the colonial economic machinery. It becomes very important in Ghana where the focus of Business Studies is business management, not ownership or creation albeit programmes in Entrepreneurship have emerged in Ghanaian universities.

Educator proposes a synchronisation between education activities and social realities, linking university activities with social enterprise as a basis to generate funds for Ghana's universities:

See, you don't just read about things, you produce them. We have engineering faculties that do not produce anything, an agric department [*departments of agriculture*] that does not produce food for the public. There are institutions that you can be linked to and let what you profess be felt there and then drift into the society. If you are productive, you'll make money.

In Pan-Africanist's view, Ghanaian universities must prioritise inter-African partnerships, scholarship must translate into observable outcomes, and there is the need to expand the African worldview to tap into different ways of doing things. Universities should be self-sufficient by:

Using scholarship to generate things that are tangible and beneficial for the university and the country. Once you are able to do that then you do not have your hands tied – who pays the piper calls the tunes. It even deals with self-censorship where you can't be critical of issues pertaining to specific activities of groups/institutions that are sponsoring/financing some programmes or projects. Example, a mining company sponsoring an academic Chair position – it is difficult to talk about the harmful effects of mining on water bodies.

All these north–south partnerships thrown out of the window and promote African–African partnerships. We need to learn to be self-sufficient and not depend on our enemies. The oldest book on earth, the *Book of Ptahhotep* [*ancient Kemit (Egyptian) book*], has a very poignant line, which says: one who listens to his belly belongs to the enemy. So if you have these tastes and desires that are given to you by your enemy, so, in order to satiate that thirst, you've got to keep going to your enemy. Everything they did was not for you; roads were to facilitate movement of resources out of your country.

Head of France drives a French car; head of Italy drives an Italian car; Germany, British, America etc. Nobody goes with what's better, they go with what's mine. This is not about objectivity. It's about what do we produce. We are the ones who are not intelligent. Let's tap into the times when we were victorious instead of being horses with blinds on.

The views of Pan-Africanist and Educator are important because Ghanaian universities must demonstrate the "ability to do" to win the trust of society and to demonstrate the relevance of universities. A connection with society is likely to enhance knowledge, skills in several traditional forms of craft and further enhance people's attitudes towards these crafts; for instance, mining, fishing, jewellery, marketing and many others.

Reverend believes there is the need to maximise the returns on natural resources in order to have enough resources to fund H.E in Ghana:

They are not teaching you how to fish but rather teaching how to eat fish. They are not teaching you on how to make money but rather "chop" [*spend*] the money.

The African should not allow herself to be manipulated. I wish all our gold would have been left in the ground but people are so greedy, so ignorant and so unwilling to safeguard the resources.

Pro-VC also cites income generating ventures and improved loan schemes as an alternative means for generating funds for Ghana's H.E. On the other hand, universities must run more efficiently as they have accrued significant wealth and also find ways to make people who have the means to pay for H.E pay:

The university guest house should be operated well to generate a lot more revenue. The student loan system should be developed to allow people to borrow money to go to school. Again there is a problem; if one finishes school and cannot get a job, how does he pay back?

But then again, there are lots of people in society who can pay so how can we make them pay? You can tax them but if you leave it like that, government will only take the money and not give it to the university.

If we claim there isn't much money coming in, we can equally make the system run more efficiently to cut down waste. It is true that the university now is making a lot of money. And I think the effort now should shift to ensuring that the universities spend the money profitably, efficiently and not waste it. The university has come into a lot of money – there is no doubt about that.

Registrar encourages Ghanaian academics and universities to strive for international research funds and foreign aid:

The universities and scholars should compete for foreign research funding because there are a lot of funds in that area to be taken. We also can rely on international donor agencies for funds for H.E.

King on his part cautions against Western funds and aid but endeavours to get the best out of African resources:

It is Africans who should be scared of Western investments. Poverty in my language means ohia – meaning to need – and it's Europe who needs my resources. They are the poor ones coming, I'm the rich one – I have, they don't have. When it goes, I don't get it back, they have damaged my soil and I have to look for ways of repairing my ecology and all these things. Any African government that goes below 75% royalties is stupid.

### **The AA Struggle: Administrators Versus Academics**

In his commentary, Educator reveals a subtle yet grave tension existing in the administration of a Ghanaian university. The discord is a power play between academics and senior administrators – a situation where the latter control expenditure and tend to misuse funds to the detriment of academic activities. Educator finds the university setup abnormal – administrators outnumber academics and tend to rise faster and receive higher remuneration. The relationship makes academics discontent and lethargic in their work. The insistence and supremacy of valuing academic publications over effective teaching and learning is becoming problematic, especially so when departments lack research foci. Educator says:

Here, administrators are even spending more and manipulating academics and dictating

to the academics so the academics don't put in their best, they feel cheated. Also, they are not insisting on quality teaching but publications, without the university itself and the department having a particular research agenda. So you insist on individual publications, which of course is important and necessary because that's the fuel of academia. But if you stress on that and give easier options to the administrators and the administrator rises very fast and higher above the academics then people are more interested to toe that line. There are more administrators in the universities than academics, why? And they seem to be getting higher remuneration than the academics, they are rising up faster. They are senior members and between three to four years they are on another level and the academic sits there and you do the chunk of the work and the administrator uses much of the money.

So much of the monies being misplaced at the university level is taking place on the side of the administrators, not the academics because academics don't control funding. The administrators buy in more vehicles, promoting themselves, taking care of themselves and getting the best accommodation blah blah blah as against the welfare of the academics. The academic only receives his salary and allowances – books and research, that's all, what else? But the administrators really consume without feeding in directly into academics. They are auxiliary but now they term themselves as core [staff], which is a mistake but many of our universities are developing that system. Look at many of the developments going on in the universities; one administrator wants to exhaust all funds, get all his kickbacks because he has just a few months left to leave. The next person will come there and there's nothing and begins to tell everybody to tighten belt. You mark a thesis and you are given 200 cedis which is not up to 100 dollars (US), whereas elsewhere, you mark a thesis and you get 1000 dollars (US) – I recently had a thesis from South Africa and it was 1000 dollars (US).

When I asked why academics oversee universities in Ghana yet get manipulated by administrators, Educator states that the structure of university administration means the singular academic Head is subsumed in the world of administrators. Administrators coerce academics to succumb to their dictates. Moreover, there is always the threat to ensure the failure of the administration of a Vice Chancellor who dares to resist. The perks of office become tools to subdue academics:

The singular academic is surrounded by several administrators and has to kowtow to the dictates of the administrators in order to survive, so though you have the VC, he is surrounded by so many non-academics: finance director, registrar, HR, Deputy Registrars, Salary Officer, accountants, so many of them that he has to dine with. That's why every VC comes and senior academic members are disappointed. They pretend to know the problems and be prepared to go there and solve them but he or she gets there and begins to dine with the administrators because the administrators will sign your salaries, per diem and your allowances. You just sit in your office and they say, Sir it is ready and you sign so they begin to play to their tune.

Recommending a solution, Educator advocates for alteration in the incoherent structure of university administration and get people with the right expertise to assume specific positions:

Like all services – prison service, the police service; immigration, just name it – you must be an academic to be a Director of Academic Affairs but the Director of Academic Affairs in this university is not an academic. He has never been an academic and is the Director of Academic Affairs and all those in that hierarchy have never taught and never encountered students before in a lecture room. They are in charge of academics so how do you reconcile this? You must be an academic, then we understand ourselves and the purpose of academic activity and what it is to champion. We have some funny blend and that's creating problems.

The concerns raised by Educator makes the phenomenon an area I would suggest for further interrogation. These tensions are not apparent, and may seem far-fetched and so escape attention. However, a study into it would expose concealed dynamics and potentially surprising new insights.

### **Accountability to Society**

I enquired on the accountability of universities to society bearing in mind that cocoa farmers contributed greatly towards establishing the University of Ghana (Agbodeka, 1998). Furthermore, taxes from Ghanaians serve as a source of revenue for the government to fund universities. Similar to previous questions, respondents shared divergent views. For instance, Pro-VC insists that universities are largely accountable to society due to the stringent methods

of audit in place:

The university is largely accountable to society. The auditing is severe and I think the focus should go back to the councils of the universities.

However, Pro-VC has concerns with the constitution of University Councils in Ghana. The current make-up does not ensure effective checks and balances to guarantee accountability, hence the need for restructuring. Specifically on Pro-VC's institution:

I think in the present circumstances, the constitution of the council is not the best. If you looked in the university handbook, from pre-1979, you would find out that people who were put on the council were people who had the experience, know-how, big accountants, and two former Vice Chancellors from outside Ghana would come down here to attend the meetings. And when the revolution happened, they threw that overboard. The government has to have three representatives and they choose their politically correct people, then TEWU [*Tertiary Education Workers Union*] people, FUSSAG [*Federation of University Senior Staff Association of Ghana*], and the students. So for me, if you want to hoodwink people, that group you can easily hoodwink. I don't think they are positioned carefully to scrutinise and question how funds are being used.

So for me, the accountability can be improved if the people who have the final say on how funds are used are knowledgeable enough to satisfy themselves that everything is being done for the good of the university.

Registrar's views concur with Pro-VC's positions:

The strict measures in place require the university to publish accounts and financial statements at specific times in the year. This and others are means of being accountable to society.

I raised instances where university Finance Directors and other Heads have struggled to justify their expenditures at Public Accounts Committee sittings in Parliament. In response, Registrar posits:

That is even further proof that at least we try to be accountable. They may be some grey areas because no system is foolproof.

Educator, on the other hand, does not see enough accountability. For fear of victimisation, people are reluctant to point out mismanagement:

The university is not accountable enough. You go for academic board meetings and management board meetings and it is not what is planned that is implemented. Everybody keeps quiet because in the university system generally, nobody steps on the other person's toes. So you just keep quiet and watch on and say maybe he's using his own intelligence and it's right to him. But it shouldn't be right to one person, it should be right to the whole team that is acting, so we have problems of accountability.

Pan-Africanist states that Ghanaian universities:

Are not accountable to society.

Reverend also subscribes to the unaccountability of Ghanaian universities because they do not respect their society:

Why would they account to people they do not regard? They may present some accounts occasionally to government but the society itself is afraid to demand accountability from the university.

To Change-Agent:

A lot can be done. The present situation is not the best.

### **Materialistic Outlook of Universities**

Another critical issue that constrains Ghanaian universities' attempt to seek funding from society hinges on the materialistic outlook of universities. Among the many areas of such affluence, I focused my enquiry on universities' fleets of vehicles, specifically official vehicles of those in leadership. Vice Chancellors and Pro-Vice Chancellors drive Toyota Landcruiser

V8s and other saloon vehicles that conservatively cost US\$80,000 and US\$40,000 respectively. Considering only ten public universities for analysis, conservatively, US\$ 1.2 million goes into provision of vehicles for only Vice Chancellors. I have not factored in that of Pro-Vice Chancellors, Registrars, Finance Directors, Deans, and other Heads of Institutes and Departments. There is no doubt that university officials need vehicles to operate, however, when universities spend such amounts on vehicles, it becomes difficult to justify the assertion that there is lack of funds – it becomes a paradox. I hasten to add that I have no concerns with academics and administrators who use their personal funds to acquire luxurious vehicles.

Responding to this, Pro-VC asserts that Ghanaian universities:

Can't complain you lack funding. This is a picture that shows the parking space for the Vice Chancellor's bicycle [*where he did his Ph.D.*]. Nobel Prize winning scientists are riding bicycles. The Vice Chancellor has his parking lot for his bicycle to park and go to work.

In any event, that kind of affluent behaviour was not always part of the university. It's a very recent phenomenon and I don't know how we can stop that. I don't accept that. And you go and tell people that you do not have funding; how do you square that?

Clearly you need these vehicles to work; the Vice Chancellor usually has to run into Accra quickly, the Registrar, the Finance Director the same otherwise there will be no pay for people at the end of the month. So a car for him to do his work is required but in fact for the Vice Chancellor you give him two cars. One to run his household because when he's about running around, his wife ought to go to the market and so on, there's no problem with that but when you begin to behave as though because of that you go for the most expensive car you can find and live it – that is the one which is wrong. So the “White man” did not leave that behind for us to go for the most expensive car; it is being abused. I think it has got to do with our nature as Ghanaians and our culture because once the person is the first, he should be seen as such. Right from the top [*political realm*], it is there, so it is not just us.

It is a very dangerous trend and if it is not checked quickly, it's leading us nowhere.



The disposition to live beyond the ordinary as mentioned by Pro-VC demonstrates the exclusivity and difference Principe (cited in Dei, 2006, p.3) calls colonial. It further nurtures the sense of superiority over others without similar qualifications and status. In any case, I find it quite problematic that Pro-VC says, “Right from the top [*political realm*], it is there, so it is not just us”. While it may not be a justification for the prevailing status quo, in my opinion, universities must set higher standards. At present, I contend that people in high positions in Ghana reflect the culture pertaining in universities.

Registrar accepts benefiting from the prevailing status quo but recognises it is unhelpful and needs redress. He indicates how attempts to alter the state of affairs are resisted by university officials:

This is one of the bad legacies of colonialism that we have continued to abuse. I benefited from it as a Registrar but it is not the best. When I was Registrar, if you see the expenditure on fuel in a month, you’ll be surprised. The truth is that the VC and the like need to travel frequently to Accra and other parts of the country, hence there is the need for these cross-country vehicles because if they don’t do that, university staff won’t get their salaries on time. So I once suggested that since Heads of Departments and some other people have to travel to Accra, it was important for us to go in a bus but that was rejected. You can come and stand by this stretch of road and count the amount of university vehicles travelling to almost the same place. Look, there was a time when Deans were demanding for V8 vehicles because they didn’t want the saloon cars. It is a bad phenomenon and definitely affects the image of the university and our ability to seek funding from the public.

Questioned further, Registrar suggests that:

We can only appeal to the conscience of these people. It has become a moral issue.

Educator expresses his disapproval of the materialistic outlook of universities, mentioning enormous wastage in Ghanaian universities:

All Heads of Departments have brand new saloon vehicles bought for them and if you are a Director up to the level of a Dean, in addition to their saloon cars, they

commandeer another four wheel V8 vehicle.

To Educator, the attitude is a means to justify the exclusivity of university Heads and their “supremacy” and:

Elitism – because you belong to a special world and need these material things to justify that status. The university keeps cutting themselves from the public. This affects funding as well – an ivory tower mentality.

Educator maintains the lack of character development in Ghanaian H.E accounts for the materialistic outlooks and the many social challenges being faced:

The problem is that we don’t teach morals, we don’t teach attitudes in our education systems, we downplay them. I often hear teachers say that how do you teach attitudes? As for attitudes you can’t teach them, they come on their own. It’s the home; if the student is well-bred at home they have attitudes. So unless we begin to emphasise and teach attitudes and morals, in every lesson and lecture that you deliver you must look at moral values, attitudinal changes that must go with the lesson so that people begin to know that what they are learning must be applied to society – society must advance as a result of your education.

Educator, Pan-Africanist and King’s emphasis on character does not come as a surprise since it underscores traditional African notions of education. Tangwa (2011) highlights the African perspective saying “correct practice even without articulate theory is always better than correct theory without appropriate practice” (p. 104). It is also worth mentioning here anti-colonial theory’s critique of colonial Western education for not allowing spiritual knowing (intuitive knowledge).

Theatre thinks Ghanaian society is materialistic and treats people based on their material position. Universities may possibly be playing along:

That should also go back to our cultural upbringing in our society; we are all materialistic to a point. I remember when somebody wanted me to be a Member of Parliament in my area. I told him, Charley, I don’t have money, I walk on the road. He

said, Charley, if you want to be an MP in this constituency, when you are coming here go and hire a big car for maybe two days and come here with it and that is where you'll get your votes. If you walk with them, they cannot see you as somebody who can lead them. You see the mentality? So you imagine how a Vice Chancellor who says I will use any means [*transportation*] would be treated. The people you want to collaborate with want to see you on a certain level before they deal with you.

However, if these vehicles are being used to travel across the country to monitor the works of the university then it can be justified, but if these these cross-country vehicles are solely being used from home to the office and driven on campus, then it is wasteful, it's a waste of money. We are not saying that people should not be comfortable but the wastage should be curtailed.

Theatre and Pro-VC raise concerns with the material expectations associated with the political culture in Ghana, however, the current political culture is not organic to Ghana even though it is not devoid of Ghanaian cultural influences. As detailed in Chapter Twelve, Ekeh (1975) explains that colonialism in Africa bestowed two publics – primordial and civic publics – and the attitude towards them differ. The attitude towards the civic public comes with enormous material expectation, and contemporary Ghanaian politics operate in the civic public. Alternatively, the attitude towards the primordial public is altruism; therefore people are unlikely to hold material expectations from traditional leaders (Chiefs, Queens and Kings). While some form of materialism permeates Ghanaian societies, the material attitudes towards the politics Theatre and Pro-VC mention are behavioural legacies of the colonial heritage, as per Ekeh's explanation. Pro-VC and Registrar also acknowledge the abuse of that legacy. Further, Rawlings' (2013) [*former president of Ghana*] advocacy for African cultural influence in political organisation in Ghana indicates the lack of African cultural influence in politics. Therefore, the concerns Theatre and Pro-VC raise about material expectations Ghanaians hold towards politicians must be interrogated within the scope of the nature of governance the schooled have demonstrated to society to elicit such attitudes. This is important because such expectations are rarely expressed towards traditional governance structures.

It is worth adding that, at the induction of Professor Joseph Ghartey Ampiah as Vice Chancellor of the University of Cape Coast in Ghana in October 2016, he said the university in 2015 spent ₵530,500 [*about NZ\$188,120*] on meals at meetings and ₵4.6 million [*about NZ\$1.6million*] on fuel. Although Professor Ampiah did not indicate any malfeasance, he found it unacceptable

and promised to curb the wastage. This supports Registrar's claim that a lot of money is spent on fuel in Ghanaian universities.

### **Possible Future of H.E in Ghana**

The future possibilities of H.E in Ghana are hopeful, uncertain, and utter despair. The responses swung between a bright future to conditions beyond redemption. But despite the portrayal of gloom, other respondents expressed optimism albeit with a caveat of worthy interventions in the present scheme. Registrar offers optimism in the future of H.E in Ghana owing to significant investment and rapid emergence of private universities due to increasing demand. Registrar suggests a greater emphasis on Science and Mathematics:

For me, I think the future is very bright. A lot of resources are being put into infrastructure and equipment in the universities. And people are still craving for university education and we can't even meet the demand. In this regard the blooming of private institutions is in the right direction. So the future looks good but concentration should be put into Science and Maths.

Theatre also sees hope in the future:

The future of H.E in Ghana is bright although we need to do a lot of things. We need to address issues on funding, create space for ourselves, and see commitment on the level of government, university authorities, lecturers and students.

Specifically, Theatre recommends universities to generate funds locally since international agencies are imposing and do not operate for the benefit of societies they claim to assist:

The country should try and reduce the cost of research degrees and the universities should also find ways of raising funds to support research degrees and stop relying on foreigners. At the end of the day, the IMF loan comes with its conditionalities. If we rely on Carnegie funds and they prescribe to us what to do, then it is a problem because every loan and support that they give us goes back to enhance what they want to do. "White people" always come here with cultural initiative support programmes and I happened to be the project officer. We write volumes of reports for them and at the end

of the day they'll come and teach you your culture and tell you, you are fools (excuse my language). So relying on foreign funding is our bane.

That's why most of these Carnegie funds and the like concentrate on the sciences because they'll do the research and give them the finding to produce drugs to come and sell back to us. So what will make us Africans, what will make us think of ourselves, they do not sponsor.

In the midst of all the challenges, the future is still bright.

Reverend acknowledges the prevailing challenges yet is confident of a prosperous future because of human predisposition to strive for progress. Moreover, a time will come when the exploited masses will gain consciousness and demand for improved conditions:

I have never given up on the fact that humanity will strive into better conditions and no matter how gloomy things might be, there's light at the end of the tunnel. It is only a gradual process through research and relevant education. Things do not change overnight so it's important to sow ideas into younger generations. The future is not that gloomy.

The Akans [*ethnic group in Ghana*] have a saying that “kwasia eniti a na agoro egu” – if the man who carries the drum for the people to beat and others to dance realises that by carrying the drum his ears are being perforated without any benefit, the day he drops the drum, everything ends. Man will never stay foolish, there will be a natural awareness and no matter how wide the gap is widening, people will at a point question the status quo.

Apart from Registrar, Theatre and Reverend, the rest of the interviewees expressed despair about the future of H.E in Ghana. The basis for the respondents' gloomy outlook is due to irrelevant systems of H.E in Ghana; apathy towards scholarship by students and young academics; misguided political leadership; and H.E's neglect to nurture character and critical thinking in students. Others are the increasing cost of university education; loss of promising academics; the disconnection of Ghanaian universities from society; and the obsession to meet unnecessary Western standards.

Pro-VC for instance articulates that:

Me, I'm disillusioned. So far as I'm concerned, it is not looking good because the things that must happen to change it, I don't see them happening and I can't imagine under what conditions these things will begin to happen to change it, so for me, it can only get worse. The society in itself is not going in the right direction and the people who we put in charge have no business being there. For me, before anything can happen, the political system has to change to a point where the people who go in there must be determined to make a change and I don't see how we can change that.

The students who come to the university absolutely put no effort into their studies. You spend time to explain issues to them and they can't be bothered. It's incredible, it's really incredible! If you take it a little bit further on, the young people on the staff; when we go for vetting, some of the questions they set, they themselves do not understand it; when you ask them to offer answers to the question, the answer they offer is not correct – and that's the person who's going to teach. I despair, seriously!

I must say that there are a very few who know what they are about and are at the very top but the majority is nil – it doesn't look good! For me, from where I sit, it's changed beyond recognition, it has changed not for the better. It has deteriorated and unless it is arrested... some of us have given up oo. Frankly, it looks bleak!

Educator shares a similar outlook but with different reasons:

H.E is sinking and sinking. H.E will continue to deteriorate. We are still sitting on the ivory tower. It doesn't look good at all. The future is bleak; imagine the fees for Ph.D studies now and many potential students have left and now we don't even have replacements, you see. Imagine fees for Diploma studies, it's now beyond 2500 cedis [about NZ\$1000]. It's not the best, and less and less people are going to find their way into the university as a result of the high fees.

Despite these bleak forecasts offered by Pro-VC and Educator, King maintains that it is not just despair but it is beyond redemption:

There is no future! Right now H.E is not bringing the best of the human being, it's just going through school. Education has three sides: one is job training, the other one is building your character, and the third and most important is having a critical mind. We've dropped the critical mind in some parts, we've dropped the value of building the character, that's gone. It's difficult to now change it because we've got structures and you've got to hit at the structures. Unless somebody with a different idea sets up a new university. Somebody somewhere needs to think about how we get out of this. On this path, we are heading nowhere. We need a new thinking, a university based on your own culture. James Small [*African American Professor*] says that we need to continue from where we discontinued. On this path, we won't go anywhere as a society.

In spite of King's stance, Council-Chair thinks the future of Ghana's H.E is there for the taking though the trajectories universities take would determine the possible outcome. Asked specifically whether the future is bright, he says:

Yes and no. The future has always been there for us to take control of. It's never been there for people who are not prepared to work for it. It'll look good if you work for it just as it happens at the level of the individual. Even the vulture has to struggle over the carcass. You may not be able to kill a lion but when a lion dies, there are several vultures that have to fight over it. The future is not as hopeless, not as hostile as we sometimes imagine it. It is there for those who are prepared to work for it and take possession of it and there is no reason why we can't take possession of it.

Commenting on a specific trajectory to employ, Council-Chair suggests that:

By and large, the university must have a comprehensive programme. There are programmes that will generate immediate income and some of that income ultimately can be used to fund what we call pure knowledge research because the university must have room for speculative knowledge. In spite of what I have just said, the university's unique role also lies in producing speculative knowledge for which no immediate use can be identified, but that is where the future lies in some cases but there should be enough programmes that are generating income.

Further, I enquired whether Ghanaian universities were working towards this end. Council-

Chair responds that the circumstances are not new in Ghana/Africa since colonialism and its worst consequences always met appropriate prescriptions. Despite Africa's inability to capitalise on past victories and circumstances, there is reason for optimism for academia, country and continent:

It took Europe over three to four centuries to completely bring us down to our knees. We may not be making spectacular progress according to our own estimation but there are ways in which we haven't done badly either. What needs to be recognised is that we are being led down a certain lane with a very shabby kind of democracy; a disembodied governance system; a governance system that is not truly mobilised and dedicated to the welfare of the majority of the people, and we are gradually beginning to learn that lesson as well. When we got to a point, at least for a short period GDP of most African countries were running higher than most of the world – it can only mean that it is possible.

Sometimes that's how history moves. In the end, what's going to release us may not be necessarily entirely be coming from us. All empires crumble eventually, not only from external forces but internal inertia. There is a sense to which this is already happening to the Western type or model of so-called civilisation. Its own internal contentment has led them a down a path. It's strange when you listen to comments from places like Norway and Sweden and Germany – why are they opening their arms to the Syrians and all these refugees? Because their own population, per the logic of the lifestyle they have adopted at the expense of other people, the logic has caught up with them – they can no longer reproduce themselves. They are already beginning to worry about where the next generation is coming from, and somebody's disaster has become their fortune.

We may very well come soon to a point where the Western world as whole will have to come to some point of recognition that look, they can no longer continue to make themselves comfortable at the expense of other people including African people. There will always be an end to that kind of system and whether we will be ready to take full advantage when that starts is another issue. Some of us are saying the one thing that is holding us from taking full advantage is that kind of vision that Nkrumah and others have suggested, we have to have a unified if not united vision. That's why some of us may be old fashioned but we still believe that the future is still a possibility for us.



There was the tendency for me to assume that these responses had a generational basis given that most of the respondents were on either retirement or heading to retirement. However, such thoughts were extinguished when the youngest respondent mooted similar views of despair, if not worse. In Pan-Africanist's perspective:

On the current path, we are heading towards doom, gloom and destruction. But again, it comes back to what our aims and objectives are, what are our taste and desires, what are our wants? If we say we want to be slaves then we'll keep towards the path of further enslavement. If however, we want to be free then we'll change that trajectory. Often times when people talk about African Studies, people ask do you think it'll be easy to go back to what we were doing before? And I say it's not even about that. The metaphor in Ayi Kwei Armah's [*Ghanaian author*] *Two Thousand Seasons* talks about a stream flowing towards the desert. It wants to be so giving and so generous but it doesn't know that is destruction. Our way is reciprocity. It is not giving senselessly to something that is destruction and it is a misconception to think of sending the stream back onto the mountain. What we are talking about is turning that stream water away from the desert to an arable land where we can have some benefit from it.

According to Pan-Africanist, the Eurocentric nature of H.E in Ghana:

Cut us off our past. Not knowing about ourselves and that we've done anything before so how can we do anything now. Our only accomplishment is the degree to which we can approximate Euro-Asians, the degree to which we can cite Greek tragedies and Shakespeare and all this insanity. A continental African from some village somewhere and you citing Shakespeare, what type of insanity is that?! So once you know that you've done something before, then you'll start to think better of yourself and you'll start to question why you have to be at the boot of someone else. You'll know more about yourself and you'll start to do more for yourself.

The school is doing what it is/was designed to do. So a trajectory would be making an educational system.

## **Conclusion**

We have been discussing the results of the alternative means of funding and the future possibilities of H.E in Ghana. A respondent indicated that the near collapse of Makerere University in Tanzania initiated the origins of full-fee paying in Africa – Ghana’s public universities took a cue from that due to the reduction in government subvention. The factors respondents attribute for the increasing cost of H.E in Ghana are a lack of productivity of universities; unsustainable models of university education; lack of inventions; and disconnection from society. Others are “unique” to the nature of the university, such as the lack of on-campus job opportunities for students. Universities were accused of wastage and encouraged to reduce the materialistic image it projects. The means through which universities in Ghana can increase their sources of revenue is to produce “usable knowledge” by connecting with the aspirations of society. Universities must desist from over-concentration on theories, and wastage in the administration of universities also came to the fore. The future possibilities of H.E in Ghana, to one respondent, is bright. While some respondents see a gloomy future, others say it can be bright despite the challenges. To another, the future is there for the taking despite the challenges.

## Summary of Findings

### *Main Research Question – How can H.E in Ghana serve a public purpose?*

The study revealed that H.E has to be localised to serve a public purpose –localised not in a vague sense but constructed on Ghanaian/African epistemological, ontological and axiological systems/worldviews. The findings recommend the recognition of Ghanaian society as value-laden to curate and disseminate its perspectives – this is how universities can share in the aspirations of society.

### *The extent to which H.E is elitist in Ghana.*

The research disclosed that Ghana’s H.E’s concentration on and privileging of Western paradigms, being a vital springboard into many social, political and economic institutions made it elitist. In addition, the exclusivity attached to some academic programmes like Business Studies and Medical Sciences make them elitist.

### *Alternative means of funding H.E in Ghana.*

The respondents encouraged universities in Ghana to generate useable knowledge in order to raise resources to fund H.E. Localising universities would create a connection between H.E institutions and society to advance meaningful knowledge to enhance the prospects of generating funds.

### *The future possibilities of H.E in Ghana.*

The study discovered a generally bleak outlook of the future of H.E in Ghana albeit with some expression of optimism. The optimists advocate for transformation in the aims and purposes of H.E in Ghana; arguing that the extent of transformation would determine the future. For the pessimists, the foundations of Ghanaian universities are faulty and there is a lack of African influence. There is also apathy from some academics and students towards scholarship; and the increasing cost of H.E make the future bleak.

### *Auxiliary Findings.*

Conceptualisation of elitism was not an original question of the study. However, I considered it plausible to ask respondents to offer a conceptualisation to situate their estimation of elitism in H.E.

The study revealed tensions between academics and administrators in the administration of a Ghanaian university. The tension focused on the application of funds and resources, remuneration and promotion within the academy.

In the next chapter, I illustrate the moments of dislocation that have occurred as a result of European notions supplanting African notions of H.E. Dislocation decentres highly schooled Ghanaian from African perspectives, largely denying them the ability to function primarily through African worldviews.

## **Section Five: Other Angles to the Study**

### **Chapter Ten: Moments of Dislocation: Reflections on the Variances of Western Formal Education on the Ghanaian/African**

#### **Introduction**

Given the discussion in Chapter Four on the history of H.E in Ghana, the nature of my school experience and the views of the respondents, I present the divergences arising due to the supplanting of African notions of H.E in this section. I call the divergences *moments of dislocation*. The dislocations are vast and it is virtually impossible to capture their full diversities and complexities. However, I concentrate on the following: historical and linguistic dislocations, journey to the West, altered conceptualisation of education, inferiorising the African being, and apathy to knowledge but love of certificates. The other moments of dislocations are new informal education, unnecessary competition, eroded spirituality, and idiosyncratic education replacing holistic education. I discuss these moments of dislocation in connection to the empirical aspects of the study and recommend that Ghana's universities re-examine these to help make H.E meaningful. Overall, I argue that colonialism hoodwinked Ghanaians. However, I duly acknowledge schooled Ghanaians as co-authors in the plight.

#### **Cultural Consciousness**

There appears to be a prevailing cultural nervousness and cynicism among Ghanaians/Africans. The damage to Africa's past and the ignorance of the totality of African history gives prominence to the outlook that African cultural worldviews are insignificant, thus the urge to abandon it for others.

It is important to awaken the cultural consciousness through African literature (oral and written) and artefacts because culture is vital to economic and technological advancements of Ghanaians. I do not argue for the rescue of the best of the past in isolation. Their deprivation is reflected in contemporary difficulties and realities. Moreover, totally abandoning the past threatens the future since the past significantly shapes the endeavours of humanity. For Africans, dislocated by the European and "Arabian" imaginations and constructs, African

cultural worldviews require advocacy in order for Africans to centre themselves in their perspectives.

## **Culture**

The essence of culture becomes profound when expressed in its entirety. Mbiti (2015) suggests:

The word culture covers many things, such as the way people live, behave and act, and their physical as well as their intellectual achievements. Culture shows itself in art and literature, dance, music and drama, in the styles of building houses and of people's clothing, in social organizations and political systems, in religion, ethics, morals and philosophy, in the customs and institutions of the people, in their values and laws, and in their economic life. (p. 7–8)

Mbiti's conceptualisation of culture illustrates how culture shapes human activities. Culture is fundamental to H.E because it is the ideology that informs a person's humanity and employs tools like literature, music, dance, clothing and others to perpetuate itself. Therefore, when cultures are hierarchized, as European colonialism did in Africa (Nkrumah, 1963), the effects of "lowly ranked" African culture upsets the humanity of Africans. Subsequently, Africans are inclined to treat African culture with contempt especially when privilege is attached to the supposed "high culture" – which is transmitted through schooling. According to Nketsia (2013), African culture remains visible, despite Arab and European attacks, although it does not shape national governance structures, education, leadership and economics. Nketsia continues to argue that the highly schooled African is caught in a binary of devotions and realities: the bait of "Euro modernity" branded by individualism or African cultural expectations that eschews values of individualism. Similarly, Kasongo (2010) argues, "One could infer that when Westernisation was imported to African countries, the hidden side of modernism was materialist interests. Civilisation was just another concept of domination: imposition of incoming new culture over traditional cultural values" (p. 314). Obanya (2011), sharing his view on cultural relevance in H.E, observes that:

In all other parts of the world, the educated is usually the cultured; in Africa, the educated is the de-cultured. Educational reforms undertaken in the continent since the 1960s have not strictly addressed these fundamental issues. Instead, reforms have

simply tinkered with curricula, school calendar and the mere proliferation of institutions. (p. xxv)

In support, Tangwa (2011) notes that notions such as ethics, education, and culture are allied concepts in traditional African education: “It goes without saying that culture is central for any system of education, and inevitably so” (p.102). Culture therefore structures and embodies modes of judgment. Culture functions to construct social organisations, conception of material and immaterial world, and perception of Self in relation to others.

Despite the importance of African culture in African H.E, culture is not static and I do not assume the indefinite preservation of the authenticity of African culture. African culture will continue to receive influences but its foundations must remain – worthy aspects kept and enhanced and undesirable aspects extinguished. Cultural destruction bequeaths ignorance and inappropriate behaviour.

### **Issues on “Modernity”**

In Ghana, the schooled barely centre themselves in African perspective(s) in discussions or analyses. To embrace things European is modernity while embracing Africa is largely backward or “traditional” and even when Africa is embraced, it must be cleansed with “Euro-sanctity”. As a result, two marriage ceremonies are common in Ghana – we satisfy traditional rites and then go for blessing in a church. What escapes our attention is that most things that shape human affairs, if not all, are established on tradition(s) – from clothes to outlook to life. In H.E discourses in Ghana, it is common to find debates and discussions on the theme: “Tradition versus Modernity”. The critical question we fail to ask is: what is modern? Dynamism in humanity is widely acknowledged because life is not static. Besides, yesterday’s modern is today’s ancient and today’s modern, tomorrow’s ancient. Modernity, apart from being new inventions/phenomenon, is essentially improving traditional ways to suit present or future needs. Simply put, it is tradition that is modernised or enhanced. Modernity is largely recycling the past and its quest should not instigate abandoning and/or replacing tradition/culture for others. Ghanaians should rather seek to improve their traditions and culture to meet present needs. The fact that the pyramids of Giza continue to baffle contemporary science does not make them modern.

## **The Moments of Dislocation**

### **Historical Dislocation**

A crucial moment of dislocation as a result of European education borders on Africa's history. This is evident in the responses of Council-Chair, Pan-Africanist, Reverend and King in the empirical chapters hence the suggestion to make history from African perspectives compulsory for all students in H.E in Ghana. According to Clarke (1994), history:

Is a clock that people use to tell their political time of day. It is also a compass that people use to find themselves on the map of human geography. History tells a people where they have been and what they have been. It also tells a people where they are and what they are. Most importantly, history tells a people where they still must go and what they still must be. (p. 44)

Marcus Garvey suggests in Chang (2006) that “a people without the knowledge of their past history, origin and culture is like a tree without roots” (p. 447). Achebe (2012), writing on Biafra and the Nigerian civil war (1967–1970) avers that:

An Igbo proverb tells us that a man who does not know where the rain began to beat him cannot say where he dried his body. The rain that beat Africa began four to five hundred years ago, from the “discovery” of Africa by Europe, through the transatlantic slave trade, to the Berlin Conference of 1885. That controversial gathering of the world's leading European powers precipitated what we now call the Scramble for Africa, which created new boundaries that did violence to Africa's ancient societies and resulted in tension-prone modern states. It took place without African consultation or representation, to say the least (p. i).

The perspectives of Clarke, Achebe, and Garvey illustrate the importance of history. However, I did not learn about African contributions to world history in school. We were to look at Africa and its history from non-African perspectives but despite the insignificance accorded Africa in education, African literature, artefacts and objects of historical significance are spread across museums in Europe and America primarily as the “other”, the ‘exoticised’.



The emergence of Europe was employed simultaneously as the beginning of Africa's history due to the "discovery of Africa". Hoskins (1992) argues that:

Eurocentric historians and educators stand accused of 500 years of distortion, falsification, and misrepresentation of the historical truth, with the sole purpose to ossify, defend, and perpetuate the Big Lie of European supremacy, invincibility, and originality co-terminous with the Big Lie of African inferiority and nothingness. (p. 250)

Since the Eurocentric agenda was to clothe Africa in "civilisation", Clarke (1970) insists:

Civilization did not start in European countries and the rest of the world did not wait in darkness for the Europeans to bring the light....Western historians have not been willing to admit that there is an African history to be written about and that this history predates the emergence of Europe by thousands of years.....It is too often forgotten that, when the Europeans emerged and began to extend themselves into the broader world of Africa and Asia during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, they went on to colonize most of mankind. Later, they would colonize world scholarship, mainly to show or imply that Europeans were the only creators of what could be called a civilization. In order to accomplish this, the Europeans had to forget, or pretend to forget, all they previously knew about Africa. (p. 3-4)

Asante (1996) shares his concerns:

Not that the overthrow of the Latin-based model of education by the Greek-based one was not anticipated by the colleges and universities of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, but the enthroning of Greece at the head of every discipline in the West carried within it certain dangerous seeds of European hegemony that eventually would demand a response from non-Europeans. Almost in every quarter of the academy and from every continent have come those responses. (p. 22)

Asante (1996) disputes the imposition of Eurocentrism as a universal way of knowing and solitary root for education. I concur with Asante that there is nothing wrong so long as Eurocentric views form the basis of European history and knowing. Asante in Turner (2002)

faults the structure of Africa Studies in American and Western universities; it is limited in scope and tends to denigrate Africa and Africans:

Europe had, in a sense, taken us out of our own position and away from our own subject place, which is our own center; we were no longer agents. We were only on the periphery of Europe. We could only become sane if we understood that we were agents in the world – not spectators, but participants in history, and actors in history. (p. 717–718)

History accordingly is an important tool for Africans to transform themselves. African scholarship must interrogate the past to understand the dynamics of what ensued and look at history from African perspectives. African history should not only elicit the tragedies and recollection of misrepresentations. The past is always alive hence history's importance to humanity. It was important to dislocate Africans historically and make Africa's past unattractive so Africans will not want to associate with it. Europe becomes a saviour and this reflects in the notions of elitism in Ghana's H.E where the taste for Western perspectives and lifestyles are perceived as elitist.

### **Inferiorising the African Being**

To dominate and subjugate people, it is crucial to make them imbibe a sense of inferiority and feel inferior. Accordingly, from the 13<sup>th</sup> century onwards, Europeans employed pseudo-scientific narratives of “inferiority” of Africans to justify enslaving Africans and subsequent colonialism. The Arabs had earlier (commencing from the 8<sup>th</sup> century) employed the means to enslave Africans (Azumah, 2014). The school came to “enlighten” Ghanaians yet subtly engineered a subliminal acceptance of a sense of “inferiority”. In the lingua franca of Ghana, English, the word “black” has virtually no positives in the language. Yet, Africans are classified as “black” people.

The schema to confer inferiority on “Blackness” is reflected in the words of former British Prime Minister Winston Churchill in 1937:

I do not admit for instance, that a great wrong has been done to the Red Indians of America or the black people of Australia. I do not admit that a wrong has been done to

these people by the fact that a stronger race, a higher-grade race, a more worldly wise race to put it that way, has come in and taken their place. (Hayden, 2015)

Hegel in Georg (1956) claimed Africa lacked history and maligned Africans saying:

The Negro, as already observed, exhibits the natural man in his completely wild and untamed state. We must put aside all thought of reverence and morality – all that we call feeling – if we would rightly comprehend him; there is nothing harmonious with humanity to be found in this type of character. (p. 93)

Casley-Hayford (2012) reveals the “agenda” to destroy, dismiss and discredit ancient African achievements in Great Zimbabwe, West Africa, Bunyoro and Buganda, and Benin. A recent (2016) movie on ancient Egypt titled *The Gods of Egypt* (Iwanyk & Proyas, 2016) cast “Whites” for lead roles – contrary to the African (Black) ethnic make-up of ancient Egypt at the time.

I studied in university that Greece and Rome had the most classical civilisations in the world. However, Asante (2009) mentions Thales, Pythagoras, Democritus, Plato, Solon, Lycurgus, Anaxagoras, Herodotus, Homer, Eudoxus, and other early Greek scholars as studying in Africa. According to Greek historian, Diodorus Siculus (1933), Kemit was “visited by Orpheus and the poet Homer in the earliest times and in later times by many others, such as Pythagoras of Samos and Solon the lawgiver” (p. 239). Diodorus says the Greeks admired Egyptian achievements “...and for that reason those men who have won the greatest repute in intellectual things have been eager to visit Egypt in order to acquaint themselves with its laws and institutions, which they considered to be worthy of note” (p. 239). Plato in Book VII of *Laws* (Jowett, 1925) expressed disgust about education in Hellenes (Greek) compared to Kemit. He asserts “O my dear Cleinias, I, like yourself, have late in life heard with amazement of our ignorance in these matters; to me we appear to be more like pigs than men, and I am quite ashamed, not only of myself, but of all Hellenes” (p. 337).

However, scholars like Professors Shinne (Canada), Mokhtar (contemporary Egypt), and Abdallah (contemporary Sudan) contest the Africanness of Kemit claiming that other beings apart from Africans constructed that civilisation (Van-Sertima, 1989). At the UNESCO conference on “The Peopling of Ancient Egypt” in 1974, Diop (1974) employs a blend of

linguistics, culture and science to establish the commonality between the ancient Egyptians and the rest of the continent, emphasising that “Black people” built the civilisation. Diop used scientific examination of skeletal remains and cleansed skin pigmentation of mummified bodies to establish his case. Obenga (2004) also demonstrated linguistic and philosophical commonalities between ancient Egyptians and other Africans.

The general conclusion of the UNESCO conference was that, although a “preparatory working paper sent out by UNESCO gave particulars of what was desired, not all participants had prepared communications comparable with the painstakingly researched contributions of Professors Cheikh Anta Diop and Obenga” (Diop, 1978, p. 102). Bernal (1991; 2006) also indicates the influence of Africa and Asia on early European civilisation.

Asante (2007a) consequently argues that unearthing Kemit threatened the foundations of the European agenda. To accept Kemit as “Black” automatically means, “Geometry, mathematics, politics, sculpture, art, astronomy, medicine, and the names of gods owe their existence to the Black people” (p. 56). Asante (2007a) contends that the imposition of European histories helps to confer notions of inferiority on non-Europeans. For instance, students are “made to accept as heroes and heroines individuals who defamed her people during their lifetime is being actually decentered, marginalized, and made a non-person, one whose aim in life might be some day to ‘shed her blackness’ as a badge of inferiority” (p. 80). Asante says the doctrine that shapes American academe:

Seems to rest upon the belief that the European culture is the world’s only source of rational thought. Every sequence of courses in the disciplines seems to assume that whites created the foundations of all knowledge on the basis of European values. And there is rarely anything in the structure of the curriculum to challenge that assumption.  
(p. 22)

Ancient Greece thus become fundamental to the European cause and with Europe’s global influence, the Greek narrative has gained foothold. Counter-narratives have become necessary to bequeath the requisite knowledge needed to liberate the mind, not just that of the colonised “others” but also Europeans and the world.

Western civilisation has associated Africans with signs and symbolisms that create the contempt for Africans and the consequent lack of self-confidence and the desire to shed Africanness. However, Marcus Garvey asserts in Downing (2013) that, “If you have no confidence in self, you are twice defeated in the race of life. With confidence, you have won even before you have started” (p. 139). Moreover, a sense of “inferiority” diminishes human potential and especially so when systematic schemes force people into certain low economic conditions to reinforce this belief. Over time, people tend to act and think accordingly. Self-value, self-worth and self-esteem are crucial in the affairs of humanity and as Biko (1978) articulates, “the most potent weapon in the hands of the oppressor is the mind of the oppressed” (p. 68). Asante (2007a) thus says, “The first step to liberation comes with being liberated in the mind” (p. 56).

The challenges that the respondents indicate as inhibiting African perspectives centre on the worldview of some schooled Ghana as having escaped this African inferiority. Furthermore, when these “elevated” notions are used to establish systems of elitism as the responses suggest, an attempt to alter them would be resisted since it is inclined to extinguish the “esteem” and privilege people derive from the status quo. I end in the words of French historian, de Volney (1787):

That this race of Black men, today our slave and the object of our scorn, is the very race to which we owe our arts, sciences, and even the use of speech! Just imagine, finally, that it is in the midst of people who call themselves the greatest friends of liberty and humanity that one has approved the most barbarous slavery, and questioned whether Black men have the same kind of intelligence as whites! (p. 83)

### **Linguistic Dislocation**

Closely linked with historical amnesia was the fortification of European languages as the languages of nobility – in Ghana, it is English. According to Katz (2015):

When a colonising force occupies a nation, the replacement of the local language with that of the colonisers is instrumental in disempowering the denizens of the occupied territory. If integral aspects of cultural identity and sense of purpose are embedded in

language, then that may be altered by replacing local words with imported ones that reflect concepts useful to the invader. (p. 559)

Language grants identity and is therefore fundamental in colonialism. Language connects people to a culture and lifestyle therefore considering how privileged the English language is in Ghana; some highly schooled folks are boastful and even pretend not to speak local languages. Former President Rawlings of Ghana argues, “We adopted the language of the West without its integrity. We have used the English language as a symbol of authority and power but not as a symbol of respect and integrity” (Myjoyonline, 2016).

The dysfunctional effects and the limitations of European languages on Ghanaians are multifaceted. They facilitate easy brainwashing and inhibit the cultural, economic, social and spiritual essence of the colonised. Amegago (2000) illustrates that English is limited in expressing African performing arts, struggles to reveal the philosophical ideas therein, and much is lost in translation both ways thus limiting creativity. Nwokeocha (2014) posits that the demarcations in Africa and imposition of foreign languages frustrate and stall integration of Africans – it is easier to relate to the coloniser than other Africans.

In the empirical aspect of this study, Reverend emphasised linguistic dislocation. While it is imperative to promote local languages in order to develop them, the dominance of English in the world would make its neglect quite problematic. However, the mastery and privilege of foreign languages at the expense of local languages is undeserving. It did not come as a surprise that Reverend suggests a “community franca” instead of a lingua franca in Ghana because of the multi-ethnic demography. For the broader desire for African integration, Ghana can follow East Africans by institutionalizing Swahili – one of the mostly spoken languages in Africa.

### **Journey to the West**

Both the linguistic and historical dislocations culminate to make H.E “*a journey to the West*” – a journey to make Africans Westerners (Nukunya, 2003; Nsameng, 2004) – dislodging the highly schooled from their roots. Hewit (ND) avers that Western scholarship portrays Africa as “the problem” and Africans “constitute a social problem” (p. 4). The highly schooled African therefore runs from Africa’s “primitive” past and “troubled” present. The empirical chapters provide enough comments indicating that European worldviews shape the outlook of H.E in

Ghana. King indicates it when he questions the quest for internationalisation in Ghana's universities. Council-Chair, Pan-Africanist, Theatre and Educator raise concerns with how Ghana's H.E process abandons the local milieu. However, Ake (2012) argues that Western social science is imperialistic due to its regular categorisation of things as "good" and "bad" – the good being Western and bad linked with non-Western or non-European (especially Africa/Black). In that vein, development translates into Westernisation and the pursuit of development becomes a desire to mimic the West. Ake (2012) cautions that such an inclination to development "encourages dependence and inculcates a sense of inferiority in the people of developing countries" and Africans' acceptance of that narrative is "admitting their own inferiority and the superiority of the West. Their drive for development becomes a manifestation of their belief in their own inferiority and reinforces this belief" (p. 11). Furthermore, such a pursuit "involves looking up to the West since it occupies the superior and enviable position of having attained the "good" state of being" (p. 11).

Kashoki (1982) accordingly contends that, in spite of the increase in African scholars, truly African scholarship is rare. Hoskins (1992) says the Western journey of African H.E pushes Ghanaians to define themselves using Europe as a yardstick, making it difficult to "extricate themselves from this vicious, divisive, and deleterious Eurocentric psychological dependency complex" (p. 250). As a result, Nukunya (2003) espouses that the highly schooled African tends to know more about Europe than their environment – "they did not know how their villages or traditional areas were governed but were expected to know the workings of the British Parliament, the American War of Independence and the British conquest of India" (p. 141). Nukunya sums up the "Western journey" saying:

Ballroom dancing was admirable but traditional dancing was for illiterates. An educated person must put on European attire when going to work. Even outside the workplace he must dress up in a manner befitting his status, in suit, shirts and trousers, shoes and if necessary a hat to match. (p. 141)

In some instances, schooled Ghanaians Europeanised their names to "celebrate" their "emancipation". In the motion picture *Heritage Africa* (1988), a highly schooled Ghanaian engaged in the colonial administration changed his name from Kwesi Atta Abusomefi to Quincy Arthur Bosomfield to demonstrate his Europeanisation (Ansah, 1988).

## **Altered Conceptualisation of Education**

The need to nurture succeeding generations has been a preoccupation of humanity – this has contributed to education. Callaghan (1998) writes that since the existence of humanity, Africans have offered education “within the framework of an African culture” (p. 31). As previously mentioned, the traditional African notions of education emphasise the nurturing of character to enhance a person’s humanity. The idea is named Ubuntu (humanity to others) in Southern parts of Africa. The Ga (ethnic group in Ghana) refer to people with such attributes as “mɛnɛ gbɔmɔ ni” – “this person is a human being”. Other ethnic groups, Akan and Ewe, also say Nipa and Amɛ, respectively. Gbɔmɔ, Amɛ and Nipa all mean human being.

The nature of Western education introduced during colonialism in Ghana/Africa altered the African conceptualisation. The social emphasis lessened for an economic prominence and the school became the sole determinant of education and the educated, clustering people into “educated” and “non-educated” groups. The consequent power imbalance drives anti-colonial theory’s call for more symmetrical power relations to ensure harmony in society (Simmons & Dei, 2012). According to Balogun (2008), owing to Africa’s colonial heritage, the “...idea of an educated person has been terribly distorted: they are confused on who truly is an educated person” (p. 122). In spite of the distortions, Obanya (2011) espouses that to the African, education is beyond schooling. Nyerere (1985), contributing to the conceptualisation of education in Africa, writes:

Education is not something which is done just in schools. The process of education begins to shape the children before they ever enter a classroom. Education starts in the home at the time of a child’s birth and continues as the child grows up in the local community. Education is affected by the social morals, the physical and social environment, the press, radio, and so on. It is an administrative necessity which causes governments to establish a “Ministry of National Education.” However revolutionary its intentions and effects, education is strongly influenced by the past and serves to influence but not to control the future. Formal education in any country is bound to be and from society’s point of view is intended to be an element in maintaining or developing the social, political, and economic culture of that society. (p. 45)



Bolagun (2008) equally laments current conceptions of education in Africa and suggests a rethink:

Unless there is clarity regarding the genuine conception of education on the continent and the nature of educated personnel that would evolve from this conception, no effective use can be made of education in development efforts. Constructively, the issue becomes more pertinent when one realizes that in some intellectual parlance, the opinion is held that education is nothing but literacy and that only those who have the opportunity to experience Western education can be regarded as the “educated”. (p. 118)

King was one respondent who concentrated on the altered conceptualisation of H.E in Ghana. It is for this position that he argued for a private person starting a new form of university based on Ghanaian values because to him, the present system cannot be changed. Pan-Africanist also expressed misgivings about the conception of H.E in Ghana.

### **“Clash of Knowledge Systems”**

A consequence of the altered conceptualisation of H.E in Ghana is the clash of “knowledge systems”. Ghanaians make a distinction between “school knowledge” and “home knowledge” – the highly schooled person who acts impractically is said to possess “school knowledge” but lacks “home knowledge”. School knowledge (also called book knowledge) is the ability to attain academic qualifications, but is normally irrelevant to social needs. “Home knowledge” (efie nyansa in Twi language) on the other hand is regarded as meaningful knowledge to master the environment. Balogun (2008) therefore argues:

Our notion of an educated person has been largely patterned after the Western conception. Thus, it is no surprise that such a conceptual model fails to achieve its purpose in African societies...although in Africa, there are more enrollments of pupils in educational institutions at different levels, more funds disbursed into that sector by government and private initiatives, but still they have resulted into a low evolution of educated personnel in Africa. (p. 118)

Nyerere (1975) states that Africans have a propensity to believe that education should make them “Black Europeans or Black Americans” (p. 3). Council-Chair in the empirical chapters highlights the clash of these knowledge systems in universities, indicating that a European outlook receives privilege.

### **Clash of Purposes**

The altered conceptualisation and purpose of H.E contributes to a clash of purposes. While traditional African higher education emphasises the nurturing of *attitude*, the pivot on which knowledge and skills orbit in society, Western H.E is a *springboard to the job market* through academic qualifications. The more critical a person’s qualification(s) (for instance in healthcare), the greater their bargaining power in Ghana. The material emphasis on Western H.E in Africa leads Nyerere (1975) to articulate that:

The antithesis of education... is the kind of learning which teaches an individual to regard himself as a commodity, whose value is determined by certificates, degrees, or other professional qualifications. Yet this antithesis of education is still too often the effect of what we call education in Africa – and in Tanzania. There are professional men who say “My market value is higher than the salary I am receiving in Tanzania”. But no free human being has a market value anywhere. The only human beings who have a market value are slaves. (p. 7)

Achebe (1966) restates an African emphasis on nurturing character: “if our people understand nothing else, they know that a man who takes money from another in return for service must render that service or remain vulnerable to that man’s just revenge” (p. 136). The seemingly unrealistic aim of H.E in Africa is reflected in Nyerere’s (1975) claim that, “our educational policies make it quite clear that we are really expecting education in Africa to enable us to emulate the material achievements of Europe and America. That is the object of our activity” (p. 3). From the empirical chapters we can see Educator, King and Pan-Africanist consistently raising questions about the purposes of H.E. This leads them to state that, until universities are relevant to themselves, they cannot be relevant to society.

## **Success and Failure**

The economic returns and social expectations attached to H.E in Ghana are huge and tend to put enormous strain on its beneficiaries. Customarily there is the expectation for the highly schooled to repay the investment made in H.E; some families also channel their problems and needs on the highly schooled for redress. Coupled with the material expectation of the highly schooled, there is a desire to amass wealth irrespective of the means. The ability to meet these social expectations grants notions of accomplishment and the corresponding social recognition and status – the reverse predisposes one to “failure”. Although this dynamic is not the yardstick to judge people without H.E in Ghana, similar achievements grant comparable prestige and respect in society. Overall, the extent of material accumulation has become the scale of measuring success or failure in life.

## **Apathy to Knowledge, Love of Certificates**

Owing to the prospects of academic certificates, the focus on H.E in Ghana is how to pass exams and acquire degrees. Knowledge acquisition or desire to acquire knowledge seem secondary. Employers desire to see “the paper” so certificates are desirable, loved and “worshipped”, contributing to rote learning as indicated in Chapter Five. The common mantra toward examinations in Ghana is “chew, pour, pass, and forget” – chew (cram) the text, pour (write) it in exams, pass the exams and forget about the information. Therefore, while H.E in Ghana may be churning out graduates, the requisite knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to help meaningful social transformation remain at sea. The apathy towards knowledge is reflected in Pro-VC’s assertion that he despairs for the future of H.E in Ghana.

## **New Informal Education**

As detailed in other chapters and sections of this thesis, particularly, the theoretical framework, the nature of the colonial enterprise disrupted every aspect of life in Ghana/Africa. Social, political, economic and cultural facets of life were disordered and considering that the acquisition and professing of the imposed European perspectives to life were privileged and judged as ‘civilised’, the desire to acquire those attributes became important. Bearing in mind that the means to acquire these European values and attributes came through the school system and most importantly, the university, the institution is held in high esteem. Schools and

universities thus wield enormous power as they could determine the future prospects and status of an individual in society as they offer a springboard into the top echelons of the economic and political ladder of society. The privileges associated with Western H.E in Ghana continue to shape society's outlook toward universities. The re-ordering of society through widened socio-economic gaps, and since the most probable springboard to scale the socio-economic ladder is H.E, society largely accepts the dictates of H.E, however superficially. With an eye on its extrinsic benefits, there is a constant reminder from the home and society not to challenge the dictates of the university. It is common in Ghana for families and society in general to caution their relatives who gain admission into universities not to oppose acts, policies and dictates of universities even if it is not in favour of the larger society. The fear is, they risk being dismissed. These 'sermons' from families and society is what I call 'New Informal Education' and tends to inhibit the need for students to act as a conscience of society. This new informal education appears in other facets of society where for instance Islam and Christianity is imposed on people. These persuasions from the home and society support Rodney's (2009) view that "The colonial system also stimulated values and practices which amounted to new informal education" (p. 293).

### **Collaborative/Consultative Tendencies to Unnecessary Competition**

The European school system thrives on competition just as it focuses on the individual. In view of the seemingly limited opportunities in Ghana, the collaborative and consultative inclinations of African culture (Biney, 2010) have given way to fierce and unnecessary competition. The unnecessary competition and value of certificates contribute to examination paper leakages and the lack of collaboration among education institutions, departments, faculties and other stakeholders in H.E. Professor Joseph Ghartey Ampiah, Vice Chancellor of the University of Cape Coast in Ghana, advises departments and faculties to collaborate, share resources and insists on the "need to start breaking this barrier" because the prevailing circumstances "will not help us" (Mensah, 2016). Politically, the fierce partisanship in Ghana is an example of unnecessary competition. In any case, individualism that eschews collaboration is at variance with traditional African higher education, an enterprise Brookfield (2010) says, "Stress community, interdependence, and collective action" (p. 73).

## **Holistic Education to Idiosyncratic Education**

Africans conceptualise life in its entirety, thus traditional African education systems are in many ways pluralistic in intent, holistic and cover the totality of a person's development to enable functionality in society. It includes physical, economic, social and spiritual development of a person and education's attachment to the environment bequeaths observable traits and relevance through the kinship forged at the outset of education. The interconnectivity with life and society grant awareness and understanding of various facets of life (Adekunle, 2000; Okoro, 2010; Nsamenang, 2004, 2005; Balogun, 2008; Obiakor, 2004). For example, an individual in a fishing community studies mending nets, building and fixing boats, preservation and marketing of farm produce. The values, norms, taboos and myths associated with society and occupation is central to education – largely to conserve the ecosystem. This conservative knowledge serves as foundations for sustainable development as future generations would also rely on these resources. The holistic approach to traditional African education allows individuals to attain a multiplicity of skills.

However, the school seems to have a sole focus on certification for corporate work. Therefore, even as students, we are disinterested in aspects of the education process that may provide other skills. As I mention in Chapter Four, when the school system was changed from O and A Levels to Junior and Senior Secondary (JSS and SSS) modes in Ghana, some private schools failed to provide workshops for the technical aspects that came with the JSS mode. The ultimate was to pass exams and get to university. The path to employability of H.E in Ghana translates into the main pedagogical approach adopted – learners are “blank slates” needing knowledge. To Freire (1970) “this is the banking concept of education, in which the scope of action allowed to the students extends only as far as receiving, filling, and storing the deposits (p. 72).” Education consequently becomes teacher-centred, especially when the knowledge is outside the cultural realms of learners. Herzog (2008) therefore writes that overall, Africans receive a formal education that is insufficient to shepherd them into a productive and buoyant lifestyle.

## **Eroded Spirituality**

Spirituality, the notion that a superior force presides over the universe, is central to the existence of Africans (Nkunya, 2003; Mbiti, 1975; Nketia, 2010). Nketia (2010) states that African spiritual systems are strongly linked to a “cosmology, which embraces a hierarchically

structured spiritual world that is referenced in verbal arts and culture, for in traditional societies nature is viewed at once as something to be revered and as something to be drawn upon for the benefit of humankind” (p. 22). Spirituality is a means to help Ghanaians to define reality and to ensure harmony with life, creation or all that exists and results in the conditions, ideas, habits, practices, principles, and rituals that people build and should build. Due to the earlier mentioned moments of dislocations, I contend that Ghanaians are highly uncomfortable justifying their humanity and perspectives within African culture because Christianity and Islam came with a sense of superiority, thus, Ghanaians are quick, glad and proud to attach their actions and perspectives under the banner of these religions. As a result, the dislocated position has become the norm. For instance, a Ghanaian Muslim would utilise Islam to justify polygyny even though much older traditional African perspectives also permit polygyny. Religion has become a way to shed the subliminal inferiority complex conferred on Africans. This subliminal enterprise reflect in Council-Chair’s claim that being a highly schooled professional and not being a Christian was odd. Accordingly, an elitist attitude has been attached to Christianity in Ghana.

As indicated in Chapter Four and the empirical aspects of the study, Christianity was integral to the colonial agenda and emergence of European universities in West Africa. Due to the close association of Christianity and schooling in Ghana, I contend it was strategic for people to accept Christianity. Best in Mumo (2012) argues that the European missionaries condemned African specialists like herbalists, mediums, rainmakers, seers, medicine men, and diviners. This disposition is similar to the fear expressed by Bishop Cheetham of the Church Mission Society that Dr. Edward Wilmot Blyden (an African) might establish a “godless” university because of his views on Christianity. Ben-Jochannan (1991) therefore contends that the imposition of Christianity and Islam on Africans confronts the traditional African worldview even though the foundations of Abrahamic religions have immense African influences. The African influences are silenced and given the present ethnic demography of some regions mentioned in the Bible (North-East Africa), Africans seem to remain largely ignorant of African influences. Achebe (2008) argues that Christianity destabilised family, clan, ethnic, communal and social structures of African societies through its divide and rule and “conversion” strategies. Furthermore, the symbolisms of Christianity do not reflect the African and the psychological effects are bound to be great. It is important to mention Council-Chair’s account of how Christianity influenced the creation of elitist notions in H.E in Ghana due to its association with universities and doctrines that it is the “true religion”.

Mbiti (1975) and Nukunya (2003) state that the symbolisms of African spirituality manifest in arts, signs, codes, proverbs, names, myths and customs usually found in sacred places. Sacred places belonged to families or the community and are symbolised by elements of nature like animals, trees, mountains and other elements in nature. Mbiti (1975) asserts that African spirituality is not an organised religion; there are neither founders nor sacred scriptures. I hasten to add that there was spiritual literature in ancient Egypt – the writings of Amenomepe and Akhenaton are examples (Saakana, 1991). African spirituality since antiquity focuses on respect, connection, interdependency and reverence of nature. The belief is that all creations function to maintain harmony in nature. Mbiti (1975) therefore rejects the simplistic conceptualisation of traditional African spirituality as ancestral worship, fetishism, and animism, albeit ancestors are revered, fetishes employed, and recognition given to forces in nature. It is my contention that the reverence traditional African spiritual systems accorded the environment has been largely lost. The “unseen power” of the universe (Supreme Being) is believed to reside in nature and manifests in the elements of nature for example, the wind, sun, moon, stars, rain, thunder etc. As indicated in Chapter Four, the environment was important in traditional African spiritual systems hence everything in nature was seen as a manifestation of the Supreme Being and efforts made to protect the environment. Currently, in Ghana, water bodies, forests and the general environment is filled with filth even though about ninety percent of the population claim either Christianity or Islam. We are no longer in tune with nature.

Another significant dislocation within spiritual dislocation is the muted essence of the feminine energy and deity. The female personality is prominent in traditional African spirituality. The expressions of the principles and elements in nature (“gods” and “goddesses”) are symbolised in male and female characters. Similarly, priests and priestesses are widespread in Africa. In Kemit (Egyptian), there was reverence to several female principles of nature (deities) – Nut (the Sky Goddess), Hathor (Goddess of Love), and Aset (Lesko, 1999). It is also worth pointing out in the same system, males dominated priesthood. Among the Ewe ethnic group in Ghana, the Supreme Being is called Mawu [*beyond comprehension*] but when accorded human attributes, the Supreme Being is Mawu Sogbolisa. The added attributes of Sogbo denote the sun symbolising the male features, and Lisa, which refers to the moon, symbolises the female features. According to Amegago (2000), this concept “translates into the union of the male and female and their procreation, indicating the spiritual and social/sexual elements of human beings” (p. 44). In ancient Kemit mythology, the trinity comprised Mother (Aset), Father (Asar) and Son (Heru) but in Christianity it became Father, Son and the Holy Spirit (Finch, 1991). An

early Ghanaian educator and politician, Hayford (1919), contesting the domination of Abrahamic religions, refers to a more ancient African spiritual system in Kemit saying:

While Ramses II [*a King*] was dedicating temples and to ‘the Gods of gods and secondly to his own glory’, the God of the Hebrews had not yet appeared unto Moses in the burning bush; that Africa was the cradle of the world’s systems and philosophies, and the nursing mother of its religions. In short, that Africa has nothing to be ashamed of of its place among the nation of the earth. ...make it possible for this seat of learning to be the means of revising erroneous current ideas regarding the African; of raising him in self-respect; and of making him an efficient co-worker in the uplifting of man to nobler effort (p. 194 - 195)

Spiritual dislocation is a vital moment that needs redress among Ghanaians considering the influence of religion. Many breakaway Christian sects found their way into Ghanaian societies largely because of the opportunities for economic advancement they came with. Simmons and Dei (2012) reiterate that spiritual knowing remains an important aspect of knowledge generation among indigenous people. Although Simmons and Dei do not emphasise the supernatural, they offer a space for the nurturing and discernment of the inner being. Bruner (1991) refers to this discernment as a form of literacy. Touching on connections between culture and spirituality, Nketia (2010) articulates that:

The relationship between spirituality and culture is an integral one, for regardless of its source, culture determines the manner in which spirituality manifests itself and the expressive forms that encapsulate, trigger, invoke or sustain it. Hence while the ultimate source of spirituality may be invisible, its contexts and manifestations in contemplative, meditative or intense behaviour or expressive forms are culturally defined. (p. 1)

### **Dupes or Catalysts?**

The advantages or otherwise of colonialism and its consequences have been highly debated. Rodney (2009), for instance, argues that overall colonialism and the colonial H.E system plunged Africa into underdevelopment. Ake (2012) shares Rodney’s sentiment and argues that colonialism and everything it came with was to develop the colonising power. Africa was



sucked into a system where it would be the basis of exploitation. Elsewhere, Woddis (1967) says the colonial venture was robbery.

Alternatively, others argue that colonialism was valuable to Africans through Western education, advanced technologies, healthcare amenities, and advanced systems of transport. Frankema and Van Waaijenburg (2005), Moradi (2009) and Austin, Baten, and Moradi (2012) contend that colonialism helped African colonies economically and the consequent relationship with former colonialists has been worthwhile to African countries.

It is worth mentioning that Africa had established indigenous political and governance systems and technological advancement that would have made Africa progress creditably without enslavement and colonialism. However, I equally acknowledge the complicity of Africans. In respect of the present challenges of H.E in Ghana – the lack of knowledge of Self and subsequent socio-cultural challenges in Ghana – people trying to escape their Africanness as well as the dependence on former colonists for political and economic “aspirations” and “inspiration” cannot solely be blamed on the colonists. As Lulat (2003) mentions, some Western schooled Africans insisted on a replication of European universities in Africa. The circumstances were rather complex because the distrust during that era would have made it difficult for African leaders to accept variations in their university, bearing also in mind that Europeans argued Africans lacked the capacity for intellectual activities. As a result of these complexities, Mbabuike (2001) contends that:

What we are currently witnessing in Africa is the metamorphosis of culture propelled by education and new ideas. The outcome so far is a slowly developing cultural hybrid which is neither purely African nor predominantly Western. But the tragic irony in this evolution is that the educational propulsion has significantly steered Africa in a retrogressive and authoritarian cultural direction. (p. 328)

Furthermore, I think some Ghanaian cultural values have played to the advantage of the highly schooled and conflated to ensure the status quo, even though these values are not necessarily contemptible. Values like the elder being right and dissuading the young from questioning the elder have not helped. An example happened recently in Ghana during the vetting of a ministerial nominee by the Parliamentary Appointments Committee. A young Member of Parliament sought to query the nominee on a scandal he was involved in the past as a Minister

of Education. Playing the “age card”, the nominee responded, “I think you were too young at the time to understand the issue” (Gyamfi, 2017). Universities should find a way to engage the age factor in a respectable fashion to ensure the elderly are accountable. Similarly, the linguistic dislocation mentioned earlier also sways in favour of the schooled because English is employed to “bully” the masses because it is largely unfamiliar to many.

In *Things fall Apart*, Achebe (2008) summarises how colonialism dislocates the African in the following conversation:

What has happened to that piece of land in dispute? Okonkwo asked.

Obierika: The white man’s court has decided that it should belong to Nnama’s family, who had given much money to the white man’s messengers and interpreter.

Okonkwo: Does the white man understand our custom about land?

Obierika: How can he when he does not even speak our tongue? But he says that our customs are bad, and our own brothers who have taken up his religion also say that our customs are bad. How do you think we can fight when our own brothers have turned against us? The white man is very clever. He came quietly and peaceably with his religion. We were amused at his foolishness and allowed him to stay. Now he has won our brothers, and our clan can no longer act like one. He has put a knife on the things that held us together and we have fallen apart. (p. 141)

## **Conclusion**

We have looked at how European notions of H.E dislocated highly schooled Ghanaians in many facets of life. The chapter has argued that, in line with anti-colonial theory, culture is fundamental to human activities and alienation from culture adversely affects the colonised (Simmons & Dei, 2012). I argue that life operates through cultural worldviews – you either centre on your cultural worldviews or adopt/adapt other cultural perspectives to shape their endeavours. Due to the unfavourable imageries of Africa and Africans by Europeans and white-Arabians, it becomes important to project worthy aspects of African worldviews through H.E. It is therefore necessary for Ghanaian H.E to situate the origins of academic disciplines in antiquity, especially where evidence abounds – for instance, Imhotep (in architecture, medicine, building, philosophy), Ptahotep (moral philosophy), and Amenomepe and Akhenaton (spirituality). Culture employs instruments like spirituality, arts, aesthetic,

economics and socio-political principles to manifest and perpetuate itself. I acknowledge the dynamism in culture and possible influences. Indeed as humanity progresses, the unworthy and obsolete traditions must give way for meaningful ones. However, so long as these cultural inadequacies (due to the schemas of the past) shape Ghanaian H.E, the self-esteem required for progress would be vulnerable. The need for Ghanaian H.E to centre on African perspectives to find and offer value in the African Self become uncompromising. There is the need to interrogate these and other moments of dislocations, redress them to assert the African position and agency.

The next chapter will discuss the views of two prominent African scholars on the nature of H.E required in Africa. I employ the works and speeches of Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana and Julius Nyerere of Tanzania to offer a case for H.E transformation in Ghana.

## **Section Five: Other Angles to the Study**

### **Chapter Eleven: Perspectives of Influential Africans on the Nature of H.E Needed in Africa**

#### **Introduction**

In this chapter I present the views of two prominent Africans regarding the nature of H.E required in Africa. I dwell on expositions of Kwame Nkrumah and Julius Nyerere – the first presidents of Ghana and Tanzania, respectively. Nkrumah, as already elaborated in Chapter Two, led the independence struggle in Ghana and contributed significantly towards the liberation of other African countries. Nyerere led the struggle for Tanzania’s independence. Nkrumah and Nyerere wrote extensively on H.E in Africa arguing for H.E to centre on African realities and values in order to be meaningful. I rely on speeches they delivered to illustrate their sentiments and vision. Although they belong to different generations, their thoughts remain relevant.

#### **Kwame Nkrumah on H.E in Ghana**

In Kwame Nkrumah’s opinion, H.E in Ghana must set out to develop Pan-African agency and to this end, Nkrumah got involved in the activities of academia principally to help extinguish what he called the deep-rooted colonial attitudes and practices (Nkrumah, 1997b). Nkrumah established the Institute of African Studies at the University of Ghana (Agbodeka, 1998; Poe, 2003) and the Ideological Institute at Winneba (Poe, 2003).

Nkrumah’s conviction was that European “elite” grammar education would not liberate Africans and at a university dinner at Flagstaff House (seat of government) on 24 February 1963, Nkrumah said:

The role of a university in a country like ours is to become the academic focus of national life, reflecting the social, economic, cultural and political aspirations of the people. It must kindle national interest in the youth and uplift our citizens and free them from ignorance, superstition and may I add, indolence....A university is

supported by society, and without the sustenance which it receives from society, it will cease to exist. (Nkrumah, 1997e, p. 11)

Although Nkrumah emphasised African centeredness, he was open to a synthesis of the best of both systems (Sherwood, 1996). Nkrumah (1997b) faults the origins of H.E in Ghana and during his inauguration as the Chancellor of both the University of Ghana and Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology, Nkrumah argued that the aims of H.E in an independent state should not re-echo colonial aspirations:

Higher institutions of learning in Africa were in the past designed to suit the colonial order and their products therefore reflected the values and ideals of the colonial powers. Consequently, colonial institutions of higher learning, however good intentioned, were unable to assess the needs and aspirations of the societies for which they were instituted. (p. 138)

Nkrumah created the Institute of African Studies at the University of Ghana to help mitigate the colonial vestiges and project African identity. Nkrumah had high hopes for the Institute trusting that, "...within a few years the institute will have a firm basis of African scholarship and that it will become an internationally recognized centre for the advanced study of African history, language, sociology and culture and of contemporary African institutions" (Nkrumah, 1997b, p.138). Nkrumah found the aim vital towards the unification and establishing a synergy (politically, economically, and intellectually) among Africans separated by false demarcations and boundaries to defeat the "colonial". Nkrumah promoted African unity from the onset of the anti-colonial struggle in Ghana leading to the book *Africa Must Unite*.

To African students, Nkrumah (1997b) encouraged them "...to maintain his links with the African scene, and thus understand the great cause of African unity to which we are committed" (p. 138). Towards the vision of extensive study of Africa, Nkrumah (1997e) established an exchange programme at the University of Ghana in 1964 – enrolling nearly two hundred students from Uganda, Kenya, Nigeria, Tanganyika (Tanzania), the USA and Europe in Ghanaian universities by close of year. The collaboration and assistance were to develop a culture of mutual interdependence among Africans while maintaining their "Africanness". Nkrumah advocated for restructuring Africa based on its classic civilisations after centuries of subjugation:

There is a searching after Africa's regeneration – politically, socially and economically – within the milieu of a social system suited to the traditions, history, environment and communal pattern of African society.

Notwithstanding the inroads made by Western influences, this still remains to a large degree unchanged. In the vast rural areas of Africa, the people hold land in common and work it on the principal [sic] of self-help and co-operation. These are the main features still predominating in African society and we cannot do better than bend them to the requirements of a more modern socialistic society.

In all your work here one thing must be uppermost in your minds: The freedom and development and unity of Africa and the moral, cultural and scientific contribution of the continent to the total world civilisation and peace. (p. 145–46)

Nkrumah (1997e) encouraged Africans to own the African narrative, as studies on Africa in Western scholarship were to promote and justify European colonialism. Nkrumah cautioned foreign scholars desiring to work in Ghana to appreciate that, “their mental make-up has been largely influenced by their system of education and the fact of their society and environment. For this reason, they must endeavour to adjust and reorientate their attitudes and thought to our African conditions and aspirations” (p. 129). Nkrumah advised African H.E institution in Ghana to “study the history, culture, and institutions, languages and arts of Ghana and of Africa in new African-centred ways – in entire freedom from the propositions and presuppositions of the colonial epoch” (p. 128).

Nkrumah requested the Institute of African Studies to be preoccupied with the reclamation and reaffirmation of Africa's great antiquity due to its propensity to inspire and motivate successive generations. Nkrumah tasked the Institute to explore and reorganise scholarly literature on Africa through collaboration with likeminded institutions in the African world to establish the foundation for African-centred education. To Nkrumah (1997e), “It is only in conditions of total freedom and independence from foreign rule and interferences that the aspirations of our people will see real fulfilment and the African genius find his best expression” (p. 131).

## **Tensions**

Nkrumah's involvement in the affairs of academia generated some conflicts. Agbodeka (1998) and Poe (2003) aver that academics saw Nkrumah's directives as infringement on academic freedom. These tensions did not escape Nkrumah's (1997e) attention because he attempted to diffuse this allegation and reveal his motives and the basis of his approach:

Scholars must be free to pursue the truth and to publish the results of their researches without fear, for true scholarship fears nothing...We know that without academic freedom in this sense there can be no H.E worthy of the name, and, therefore, no intellectual progress, no flowering of the nation's mind. The genius of the people is stultified. We therefore cherish and shall continue to cherish academic freedom at our universities. (p. 12)

Despite Nkrumah's explanation, it is noteworthy that some of his utterances would make friends in universities. According to Nkrumah (1970b):

Our pattern of education...was formulated and administered by an alien administration desirous of extending its dominant ideas and thought processes to us. We were trained to be inferior copies of Englishmen, caricatures to be laughed at with our pretensions to British bourgeois gentility, our grammatical faultiness and distorted standards betraying us at every turn. We were neither fish nor fowl. We were denied the knowledge of our African past and informed that we had no present. What future could there be for us? We were taught to regard our culture and traditions as barbarous and primitive. Our text-books were English text-books, telling us about English history, English geography, English ways of living, English customs, English ideas, English weather... All this has to be changed. (p. 49)

This statement demonstrates Nkrumah's aspiration to eliminate the Eurocentric cloak he thought had enveloped H.E in Ghana. Although contextually apt, the utterance was bound to irk and displease others.

## **Nkrumah's Call for a Public Purposed Focus of H.E Institutions**

Nkrumah (1997e) realised the growth of individualism at the University of Ghana and proposed a rethink. Nkrumah denied usurping academic freedom, insisting academic freedom was not absolute. Moreover, some academics could hide behind academic freedom to perpetrate acts against the greater good of Ghana:

There is, however, sometimes a tendency to use the words “academic freedom” in another sense and to assert the claim that a university is more or less an institution of learning having no respect or allegiance to the community or to the country in which it exists and purports to serve. This assertion is unsound in principle and objectionable in practice. The university has a clear duty to the community which maintains it and which has the right to express concern for its pressing needs. (p. 12–13)

Nkrumah (1969) noted that the evolving nature of colonialism and the lack of awareness of colonial schemas perpetuate it and would eventually lead to Africa's physical re-colonisation. The defeat of European colonialism does not mean the extinction of colonialism. Accordingly, it is vital for Africans to realise the covert schemes of colonialists because to them “Africa needs to be recolonised” (p. 18). The basis for Nkrumah's advocacy for appropriate consciousness is a desire for Africa's wealth.

Back to Nkrumah (1997a), while inaugurating the students' chapter of the Convention People's Party (CPP-SU) at the University of Ghana, Nkrumah espoused that CPP-SU was to contribute towards the nurturing of conscientious, confident and nationalistic people. Furthermore, the creation of CPP-SU was to dispel the growing belief that Nkrumah and his Convention People's Party were “anti-intellectual and contemptuous of knowledge” (p. 78). Nkrumah (1997a) explained that the CPP rated knowledge per its usage not just acquisition and was “only impressed when the knowledge acquired is applied to achieve positive and practical results for the upliftment of the people” and “knowledge to find truth” (p. 78). Nkrumah took the opportunity to acknowledge and comment on the resistance he faced within the university:

...the University College of Ghana has hitherto been associated with anti-Convention People's Party attitudes, which is the equivalent of saying that the University College is antigovernment of the day. This has been rather unfortunate since that Party is not



only composed of the greatest majority of our countrymen, but is also supported by a large number of Africans and people of African descent all over the world. (p. 78)

To Nkrumah (1997a) the ceremony was to bridge the gap between the academics and society as well as to instil the values of the CPP into the university since a Eurocentric cloak of H.E in Ghana isolated several intellectuals in national affairs. The university lived in a world alien to its society, hence its inability to contribute meaningfully to society. The university:

Live in an ivory tower in a world of their own, escaping from reality and cutting themselves off from the practical life of the people. By so doing they miss the glorious opportunity of identifying themselves with the political and economic aspirations of the people and so deprive themselves of the ability to link their lives with the life of Ghana. I have always stressed the fact that our young men and women must exemplify the excellence of knowledge by the intellectual humility which academic eminence breathes. I have described as “intellectual pomposity” that arrogance which is the hallmark of half-baked intellectualism. We are determined to take steps to ensure that that shall no longer be the lapel flower of the youth turned out from our national institutions of learning. (p. 79)

A part of Nkrumah’s (1997a) plan was to get students “to work in the offices, shops, the fields, the farms and in other work places” (p. 79) at some point in their long vacations to make them come to terms with the everyday realities of the masses. Through this, students would acquire relevant knowledge to be equipped to provide beneficial services to the citizenry – the basis for public funding.

Nkrumah (1997a) was optimistic in the future of the university and generally H.E in Ghana. The caveat was the nurturing of realistic outlooks and shedding the alien and selfish tendencies for a modest and service-based approach:

The University College has a great future provided it can shed the Don Quixote armour of unreality which has ruined so many modern institutions which have tried to live a life of self-deceit with both their head and feet in the clouds. My message to the student of this College is: “come down to earth.” There are great changes with many values taking place in our country today [sic]. The problems that these changes bring are all

clamouring loudly for solutions. It is up to this University College and our other institutions of learning to produce the right type of men and women who will stand shoulder to shoulder with their countrymen in finding the solutions to these problems. (p. 80)

### **Opposition from Academia**

A few weeks after Nkrumah's overthrow extinguished any doubt about tensions between Nkrumah and the University of Ghana. At a Congregation in March 1966, Dr. Alexander Kwapong, the first Ghanaian Vice Chancellor, dedicated almost half his speech to Nkrumah's unpleasant schemes and the dangers Nkrumah posed to the university. Kwapong (1966) was aware of his extensive devotion to Nkrumah:

If I have devoted considerable time to the danger which had threatened this university, it is because I wish to re-emphasise to the whole nation that the existence of this university as a centre of critical and independent thought is not a luxury but an essential necessity for the future well-being of a free and independent Ghana. We are very fortunate indeed to have been spared the final catastrophe, and this institution has shown resilience, thanks to the innate qualities of the majority of its staff and students, and the solidity of the foundations upon which it has been built, and its devotion to the highest academic traditions. (p. 548)

Kwapong's (1966) speech welcomed the coup d'état, expressing the university's joy as the occasion offered an opportunity for a brighter future. The coup was "the *coup de grace* to this university as a free institution of higher learning, as we understand it" and "...greeted by the overwhelming majority of the staff and students of this university with almost delirious rejoicing." The circumstances tampered with discipline on campus because "...Some students naturally wanted to give vent to their pent-up feelings of vengeance and resentment against their erstwhile oppressors" (p. 546–547).

Kwapong (1966) expected the formative years of the university to be stormy but Nkrumah overwhelmed them with his actions. The phase was "periods of crisis in its growth" (p. 542) and the university needed dynamism to weather such storms or risk collapse. Kwapong dispelled criticisms of elitism:

It has been the fashion to brand this university as an “ivory” tower. If you look round you at these solid concrete walls, topped by the red roofs and the beautiful landscaped grounds, with their avenues, parks and gardens, you might be tempted to think that perhaps we enjoy too many of the good things of life within these walls and that, therefore, we live in glorious isolation from the developments of this country. At least that was the criticism so constantly levelled at this institution. But the people of Ghana know better. Ivory, incidentally, is one of the precious commodities that Africa produces and if by the “ivory” tower we refer to the excellence of this commodity, then we in this university should be proud of the ivory in the tower. But, of course, our critics mean something different. (p. 542–543)

Despite Kwapong’s (1966) concession for dynamism, the propositions of Nkrumah were unacceptable and the incessant criticisms made Nkrumah high-handed and a nuisance:

As you all know, this institution has been subjected to the most merciless and persistent attacks by the regime of Kwame Nkrumah. When it seemed that all of the several institutions of this country had fallen before the resistless advance of his totalitarian power, this institution appeared to be one of the few but most important bastions of freedom still left in the country. In this university, with its substantial body of scholars recruited from all over the world and dedicated to the pursuit of truth, scholarship and research, unfettered by any foreign ideology or creed and enjoying academic freedom, Kwame Nkrumah and his henchmen, it was quite obvious, saw one of the most powerful obstacles to the realisation of his despotic ambitions. (p. 543)

In spite of the entrenched positions, Nkrumah and Kwapong shared quite a similar goal – H.E for the public good, but the means created the agitations. According to Kwapong (1966), at a conference of the International Association of Universities in Tokyo, September 1965, he concurred with the assertion of Sir Hector Hetherington, former Principal and Vice Chancellor of the University of Glasgow that:

Full recognition of the principle that the duty of the universities is to serve the public interest, rightly conceived; that their claim to a high degree of autonomy rests not on privilege, but on the teaching of experience; that only under that condition can they give the full measure of their service; and that they have no title to be exempt from public

interest, judgement and criticism – on the contrary, that they use their freedom best when under the stimulus of such judgement, they hold their policies under frequent review. (p. 544)

On Nkrumah's concern of the tendency to exploit academic freedom against the common good, Kwapong (1966) said:

It was said by the critics of this university that academic freedom was a luxury which Ghana in its bid for rapid development could ill afford. Academic freedom was held up to be a shibboleth behind which imperialist, colonialist and neo-colonialist agents and their stooges sheltered, and in the rapid march towards the new socialist paradise and African unity, there was no place for this outworn bourgeois concept. (p. 543)

### **“Foreign Aid” in the Debacle**

Kwapong (1966) illustrated in his speech the role Dr. Conor Cruise O'Brien (Kwapong's predecessor) played in the fight against Nkrumah “but so long as we had, fortunately, an internationally well-known scholar, who was also an expatriate, at the head of our university, these attempts to bring the University of Ghana to heel were kept at arm's length” (p. 544). According to Kwapong, Dr. O'Brien at the end of his tenure in 1965 expressed the decrease in academic freedom.

The role of foreigners (especially Europeans) in the debacle was bound to entrench the government's position, having just emerged out of colonialism. Moreover, per Nkrumah's claim that the “Black man” is capable of handling his affairs and preference for self-governance in danger rather than servitude in tranquillity, the role of Europeans in the debacle was bound to muddy the situation. Furthermore, considering that Nkrumah broke away from the UGCC to form the CPP due to perceived elitism and Euro-centeredness, relations were bound to be murky.

Kwapong (1966) articulated that Nkrumah's intentions were to make the university a CPP university, change teaching and learning approaches and introduce new compulsory courses. The university held these acts in contempt and a form of “academic neo-colonialism”.

Nkrumah's public approval of academic freedom was a façade due to the schemes to usurp the authority of the university:

Nkrumah's dictatorship, between theory and practice was to have been resolved finally....that academic freedom can be dismantled not only by the application of external force, but also by subversion from within by internal collaborators. The tiny minority of collaborators were of two kinds, both expatriate and Ghanaian, as we all know, and their weapons were subtle, hidden and varied: malicious delation [sic] and adulation of both the "sober" and "unsober" variety; intellectual dishonesty, supported by arbitrary arrest and detention. It is regrettable that both senior and junior members fell victims to the temptations offered by Nkrumaism and were able to do considerable but not permanent damage to this university. (p. 547)

A congregation a few weeks after Nkrumah's overthrow was perfect and the university was unapologetic in expressing its excitement:

The congregation address of a Vice Chancellor is normally devoted to a report on the year's activities and to a record of the achievements, the hopes and aspirations of the university. You will agree that this is not a normal occasion; it is our first truly free congregation since we became a university and, since we are in the process of a thorough review of our whole internal system, I shall make my report on the events of the year very brief. (p. 549)

Kwapong (1966) accordingly congratulated and welcomed the National Liberation Council (the next government) as a breath of fresh air. Despite the unconstructive circumstances, Kwapong cautioned against undue exaggeration because "we have been able to maintain our academic standards at the top relatively in tact and I am proud to say that this university has gone through the ordeal bruised but basically sound" (p. 548).

### **Nkrumah's Nemesis**

Nkrumah's impasse with the university demonstrates the thin line between liberation and torment and the swiftness with which the tides sway between a liberator and a tormentor. The political nature of decolonisation was also evident. However, I contend that Nkrumah's

nemesis was his desire to clamour his ideas under the banner of CPP – this was inclined to irritate people with different political persuasions. Also, Nkrumah’s attempts to “over paternalise” his ideas and activities were bound to cause disenchantment.

In all, Nkrumah’s ideas – humility in scholarship; African identity and realities shaping African H.E; the need to empathise with the poor and vulnerable; and the need to chart a course for African unity – remain relevant at present. Nkrumah (1997e) was convinced these would lead Ghana/Africa into prosperity since H.E should focus on the public good:

It should be an honour and responsibility of those of us who have had the privilege of the best education our country can afford to strive in every way possible to make our generation better than we found it. We must not only feel the pulse and intensity of the great African revolution taking place in our time, but we must also make a contribution of its realisation, progress and development. (p. 11)

### **Julius Nyerere on H.E in Tanzania**

Mwalimu Julius Kambarage Nyerere, the founding President of Tanzania was also an ardent crusader of African liberation and dignity. Kassam (2000) states that Nyerere’s passion for education bestowed the title Mwalimu (*teacher* in Swahili). Some of Nyerere’s works include *Education for Liberation* (1975), *Education for Self-reliance* (1967), and *Adult Education and Development* (1976). Nyerere’s views were similar to Nkrumah – nationalistic and pinned on African ideologies. According to Nyerere (1975), fundamentally education should liberate the mind – anything else is worthless. However, H.E in Tanzania was detached from society due to its colonial heritage, which privileged a minority that did not foster social cohesion – these were the malfunctions of education. In Nyerere’s view:

To “liberate” means to “set free”, and to “set free from something”. It implies impediments to freedom having been thrown off; it can therefore be a matter of degree and of a process. Thus, when a man succeeds in untying his wrists and liberating his arms, he can use his hands to liberate his feet from the shackles which bind them. But a man can be physically free from restraint and still be unfree if his mind is restricted by habits and attitudes which limit his humanity. (p. 4)

To Nyerere (1975), H.E in Tanzania deviated from social realities and expectations hence the need to question the essence of schooling. Colonial H.E's detachment from society led to the inability to synthesise into its system social activities, which therefore lacked the character to produce an egalitarian Tanzania. Nyerere insisted that enhancing humanity as an element of society would lead to liberation and this must be the purpose of education:

The purpose is not the development of objects – whether they be pyramids or irrigation ditches, railways or palaces. The development of things – what is usually called economic development – can be involved in the development of man. It is so involved in Africa. But the purpose of education is not to turn out technicians who can be used as instruments in the expansion of the economy. It is to turn out men who have the technical knowledge and ability to expand the economy for the benefit of man in society. (p. 6)

The nurturing of character to enhance a person's humanity, which is prominent in traditional African notions of education, permeates Nyerere's thoughts. Nyerere (1975) contends that primarily, H.E in Tanzania must prepare people for life, and help them function effectively and serve their society. The competitive schemes to privilege a few and the emphasis on the material ends were hopeless and disingenuous. Despite the importance of work, an appreciation of the purposes of specific tasks and striving to achieve them are more essential. H.E should thus transcend employment. However, should work assume primacy for H.E then humanity is reduced to mechanical items – this threatens the social nature of humanity. The de-emphasis on work did not mean Nyerere found them irrelevant. The pursuit of technical and vocational knowledge must operate in an atmosphere that promotes altruism because equating education to training tends to breed selfish inclinations that keep societies unbalanced and unfair. Moreover, the material focus of H.E would make the liberation of the mind elusive:

It is certainly true that Africa has great need of men with technical knowledge, and that our freedom is restricted by the absence of such men.....What I am trying to do is to make a serious distinction between a system of education which makes liberated men and women into skilful users of tools and a system of education which turns men and women into tools. I want to be quite sure that our technical and practical education is an education for creators not for creatures....that our educational institutions are not going to end up as factories turning out marketable commodities. I want them to enlarge

men and women and not convert men and women into efficient instruments for the production of modern gadgets. (p. 6)

Nyerere (1975) maintained that his conception of liberation does not abnormally overextend the elasticity of the word 'liberate' – it is freeing one's humanity. H.E should not make people consider their knowledge as an instrument of abuse as it creates dysfunctional relationships. Professionals eke glamorously from society while contributing mediocrity; and the sense of entitlement displayed by the highly schooled was unworthy – insisting people with such a worldview do not qualify as liberated beings. Self-centredness cannot be liberation. Besides, the uniqueness of every human being presents a potentially unique contribution to the effective functioning of any society, hence the need to liberate as many people as possible:

For man is a social animal. A man in isolation can be neither liberated nor educated, the words are meaningless in relation to an abandoned child brought up by wolves. And education is a social activity, with a social purpose. It is individuals who are educated. But they are educated by their fellows, for the common purposes of all members of the society. The intention is to develop them as human beings who are part of mankind. (p. 6–7)

The realities and social constructs created by the colonial heritage left dire consequences on the continent. For the highly schooled, the inability to meet the colonially structured system of privilege generated discontent and animosity among them. In Tanzania, Nyerere (1975) observed:

There are educated people in positions of leadership in government who say: "I am an educated person but I am not being treated according to my qualifications – I must have a better house, or a better salary, or a better status, than some other man." But the value of a human being cannot depend on his salary, his house, or his car; nor on the uniform of his chauffeur. (p. 7)

To Nyerere (1975), those who utter the "qualification" sentiments often justify such a stance as "rights" – rights conferred by their qualifications. However, such reasoning and behaviour contradict their intended belief (the rights they seek). H.E had become a system that reduces individuals into marketable commodities like cocoa or timber or teak. The substance of the



highly schooled resides in materialism and is akin to the material worth of commodities in an open market. The need to liberate had been lost; H.E in Tanzania/Africa tends to “upgrade” the humanity of its recipients above their kind. To this sense of superiority, Nyerere (1975) cautions that “they are not claiming – or not usually claiming – that they are superior human beings, only that they are superior commodities” (p. 7).

Nyerere (1975) argues that the notion of superiority instigated the growing plague of individualism and greed across Africa. With this attitude, the highly schooled live in a world of “me, myself, and I” – desirous of plundering the wealth of their societies for personal benefits and that of their cronies. The highly schooled demand excessively and though the state feeds, clothes, and houses them as rewards for their education, they return the gesture by providing justifications why circumstances cannot change. Nyerere pitied such a disposition, and judged the highly schooled as products of malfunctioning education and held liable institutions that produce this shame as gifts to society:

For it is the education we are now giving in Africa, and the social values on which it is based, which is creating the people we condemn. It is our education system which is instilling into our young boys and girls the idea that their education confers a price tag on them, and which makes them concentrate on this price tag. It is our educational system that ignores the infinite and priceless value of liberated human being, who is cooperating with others in building a civilization worthy of creators made in the image of God. (p. 8)

In Nyerere’s (1975) view, a liberated person should not feel a sense of superiority and difference but act and work together for the common good. The liberated are conscious of their humanity and have the ability to influence positively. People should therefore halt in celebrating H.E in Tanzania/Africa as it deviates from producing liberated minds. H.E must produce leaders desiring the opportunity to serve, not the reverse. It is important for products of H.E to assume leadership in every facet of life and not be mere tools for production:

The antithesis of education...is the kind of learning which teaches an individual to regard himself as a commodity, whose value is determined by certificates, degrees, or other professional qualifications. Yet this antithesis of education is still too often the effect of what we call education in Africa – and in Tanzania. There are professional

men who say: “My market value is higher than the salary I am receiving in Tanzania.”  
But no human being has a market value except a slave. (p. 7)

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has been looking at the views of Kwame Nkrumah and Julius Nyerere on the nature of H.E that Africa requires to achieve the public cause. Their views primarily converge on the need for H.E to reflect society and social realities and not as a means of elevation above society. This approach offers a strong opportunity for H.E to serve the interest of society. To these scholars, H.E must primarily serve a public purpose and be Africa-centred to be meaningful and relevant to Africans. Although H.E must lead to liberation and altruism, the economic emphasis of H.E in Africa fails to liberate the mind of the highly schooled to enhance their humanity.

The next chapter demonstrates the prevailing colonial relationships that exist in Ghana and the ways they shape social relations. It shows how the notions of superiority and difference exhibited by the highly school permeate and shape different facets of relationships in Ghana.

## Section Five: Other Angles to the Study

### Chapter Twelve: Prevailing Colonial Social Relationships in Ghana

#### Introduction

Colonial and re-colonial (recolonising) relations in Ghana may appear obvious or obscure though they shape and permeate society. This chapter attempts to illustrate how the vestiges of colonial structures continue to shape social relationships and bestow behavioural inclinations such as mistrust, apathy to and exploitation towards the state in Ghana.

According to Ekeh (1975), a legacy of European colonialism is the classification of African societies into “lower”, “middle” and “upper” classes. The basis for this classification is alien because:

The European colonial rulers of Africa and their African successors in the postcolonial period do not fit readily into the same social stratification system with other segments of the societies they ruled and now rule. The African bourgeois class especially does not have an upper class, an aristocracy, over and above it, although it does have a defeated traditional aristocracy whose bases of power have been weakened by the importation of foreign techniques of governance. (p. 94)

Ekeh (1975) contends that the highly schooled have regenerated the colonial relationship, in many instances developed and implemented systems that foster their self-centredness – legal and political systems that guard their interest. They use the pen to strip the masses of the common wealth and fight progressive traditional African philosophies that seek economic and political liberation. Rodney (2009) therefore states that the African middle-class has been a collaborating force in colonialism and neo-colonialism and remains an obstacle towards confronting colonialism. Fonlon (1965) concurs, arguing that colonial education thrives and sustains itself on materialism, accumulation and hoarding of wealth for the minority it privileges.

Ekeh (1975) classifies two publics (primordial and civic) as emerging out of colonialism in Africa. I will explain how attitudes towards these publics continue to shape relationships in

Ghana. The analysis highlights the state of “democracy” in Ghana and further touches on how a decolonised attitude would work to enhance society.

### **The Colonial Relationship**

Fanon, Nkrumah, Césaire and Senghor, in earlier chapters indicate how colonial education in Africa sustain colonial relationships due to the belief that highly schooled Africans are self-seeking. For instance, Fanon (2004) calls some highly schooled Africans the “colonised intellectual”. They cherish European ideals, and lay impediments towards decolonisation. Nkrumah (1973c) insists these intellectuals are subservient to Europe. According to Fanon (2004):

In its narcissistic monologue colonialist bourgeoisie, by way of its academics, had implanted in the minds of the colonized that the essential values – meaning Western values – remain eternal despite all errors attributable to man. The colonized intellectual accepted the cogency of these ideas and there in the back of his mind stood a sentinel on duty guarding the Greco-Roman pedestal. (p. 11)

To Fanon (2004) colonial standards are valueless to the masses because society operates on the collective and common wealth – opposed to individualism and private capital advocated by colonised intellectuals. The emphasis on personal gains underpinned the apathy of colonised intellectuals towards radical anti-colonial struggles. The colonised intellectual “learned from his masters that the individual must assert himself. The colonialist bourgeoisie hammered into the colonized mind the notion of a society of individuals where each is locked in his subjectivity, where wealth lies in thought” (p. 11). Words like “brother,” “sister,” “comrade” were barred by colonists because to them “...my brother is my wallet and my comrade, my scheming” (p. 11). However, the liberation struggles confronted the colonised values because it did not resonate with the masses. Similarly, “...the colonized intellectual witnesses the destruction of all his idols: egoism, arrogant recrimination, and...childish need to have the last word” (p. 11). The once held “superior” Western values were worthless as local social theories triumphed over Western imbued worldviews.

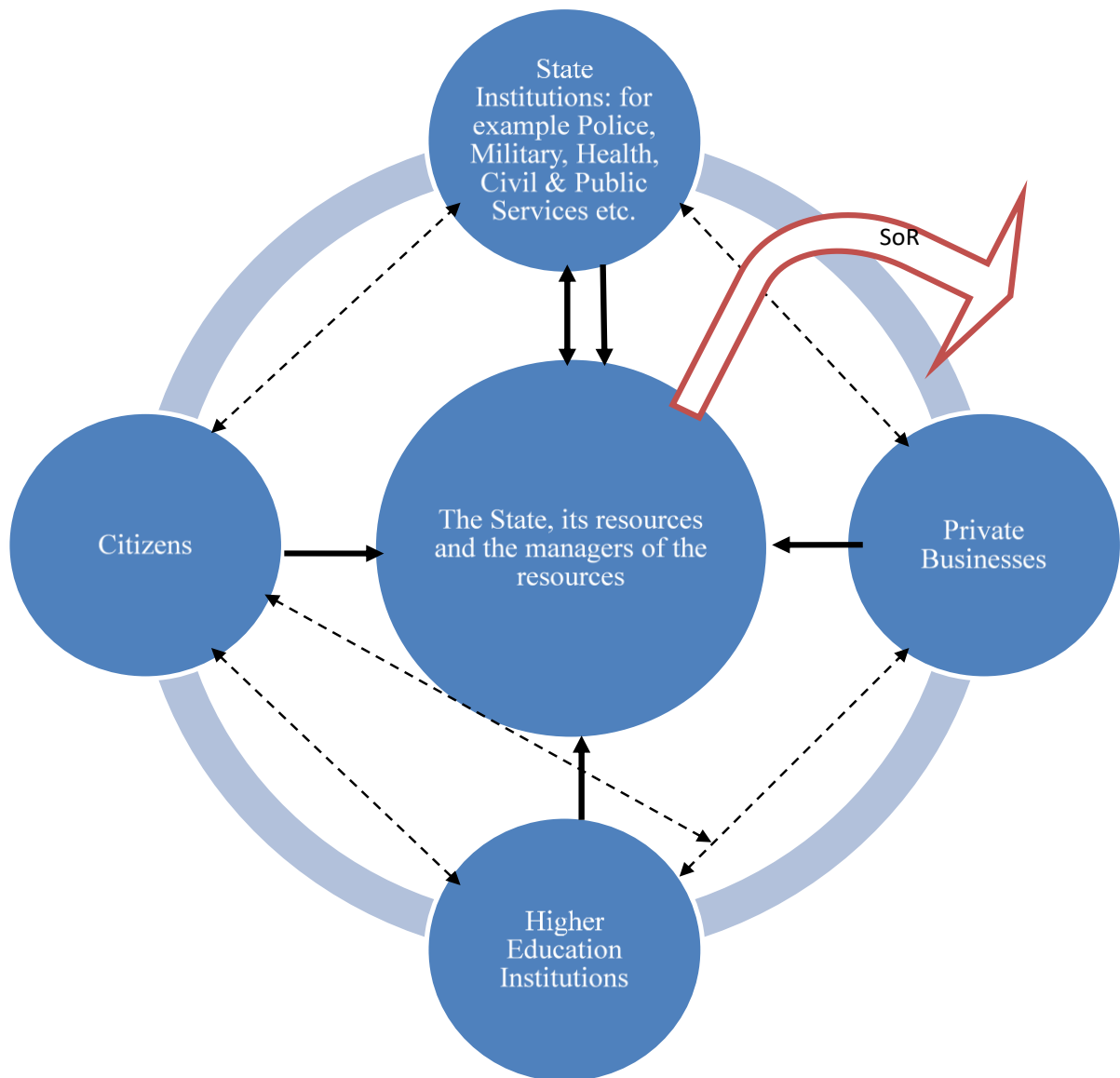
While Fanon’s assertions remain valuable today, it is important not to cage all intellectuals as colonised intellectuals. In Ghana, for instance, there was a sharp divide among intellectuals in

the struggle for independence – the “independence now” group, and “independence at a future date” group (Nkrumah, 1963).

The self-seeking accusation of the highly schooled potentially contributes to alienate the masses from holding a sense of nationhood and is likely to produce indifference and despondency displayed towards the state, constraining the collectivism needed to forge union for a common sense of purpose. It is in this light that anti-colonial theory advocates for awareness of the guises in which the colonial and re-colonial relations continue to manifest in order to offer effective agency. The accusation against the highly schooled propels the theory to encourage those with power to ensure symmetrical power relations due to their mutual coexistence in society (Simmons & Dei, 2012).

Figure 1 attempts to capture the manifestation of colonial relationships in Ghana.

Figure designed by the researcher



**Figure 1**

*Social Relationships with a Colonial Mentality*

**\*Key:** SoR – Siphoning of Resources

Figure 1 illustrates the pivotal function of the state in coordinating institutions in Ghana. The state and its institutions remain colonial legacies despite the transformations they might have experienced. On the other hand, the inability of Ghanaians in leadership to significantly alter the colonial aims of these institutions sustains a sense of disaffection towards them. Ekeh (1975) attempts to explain the mistrust associated with the governance structures in African countries, and the complexities involved in leaders detaching themselves from the colonial umbilical cord:

In the course of colonization a new bourgeois class emerged in Africa composed of Africans who acquired Western education in the hands of the colonizers, and their missionary collaborators, and who accordingly were the most exposed to European colonial ideologies of all groups of Africans. In many ways the drama of colonialism is the history of the clash between the European colonizers and this emergent bourgeois class. Although native to Africa, the African bourgeois class depends on colonialism for its legitimacy. It accepts the principles implicit in colonialism but it rejects the foreign personnel that ruled Africa. It claims to be competent enough to rule, but it has no traditional legitimacy. In order to replace the colonizers and rule its own people it has invented a number of interest-begotten theories to justify that rule. (p. 96)

The elucidation by Ekeh supports the common mistrust of institutions like Legislature, Police, and Judiciary in Ghana. This inclination is pervasive among Africans worldwide due to events of the past. The enslavement period, a great wealth-building tool for enslavers, factored well with the raw materials colonialism provided to launch the development of the West. To sustain the exploitative schemes, Fanon (2004) argues, “The colonies have become a market. The colonial population is a consumer market. Consequently, if the colony has to be constantly garrisoned...A blind domination on the model of slavery is not economically profitable for the metropolis” (p. 26).

Ekeh (1975) implicates the highly schooled African for perpetuating the cycle of exploitation due to the emergence of two publics owing to colonialism. One of the publics “is closely identified with primordial groupings, sentiments, and activities, which nevertheless impinge on the public interest” (p. 92). Ekeh calls this public “primordial” and “whether it be narrowly defined as limited to an extended family of some two hundred individuals or, far more likely, to a whole emergent ethnic group ranging from half a million to some ten million people” (p.

107). I term this – original public. The other “is a public realm which is historically associated with the colonial administration and which has become identified with popular politics in post-colonial Africa. It is based on civil structures: the military, the civil service, the police, etc” (p. 92). Ekeh names it civic public but I call it “colonial public” (the state).

Ekeh (1975) says there is moral and amoral attachments to the original public and the colonial public (the state) respectively. Contemporary politics in Ghana and Africa exist and operate in these publics because “the colonial experience itself has had a massive impact on modern Africa. It is to the colonial experience that any valid conceptualization of the unique nature of African politics must look” (p. 93). There is a transfer of the inherited immoral attributes of colonialism to the colonial public although the original public maintains its moral attachment. The disposition to the original public is hard work, diligence, and loyalty devoid of material expectations. However, these attributes are absent in relation with the colonial public.

Further, Ekeh (1975) indicates the interplay of colonial factors that influence and shape politics and governance in Africa. First, there are two groups operating in this relationship – the emerging European bourgeois (during colonialism) and their nurtured African bourgeois (post-independence). These groups shape the two publics philosophically to authenticate their governance of the masses – the basis for such thoughts. While Europeans promoted their ideologies to justify their subjugation of Africans, the African bourgeois have a binary focus – a means of supplanting European colonialists and legitimising their rule of the citizenry. The contrasting relationships and ethos of these publics have wide-ranging effects as the notion of citizenship differed in both publics. In traditional African societies, citizenship just like leadership/kingship operates on moral terms; people perform duties as a moral obligation:

Although the African gives materially as part of his duties ...what he gains back is not material. He gains back intangible, immaterial benefits in the form of identity or psychological security...like most moral spheres, the relationship between the individual and his primordial public cannot be exhausted by economic equations. There is more to all moral duties than the material worth of the duties themselves. (p. 107)

According to Ekeh (1975), citizenship in the colonial public is amoral and enormous importance accorded material gains. Despite the selflessness and sacrifices to preserve the original public, the relationship with the colonial public (the state) “is measured in material



terms – but with a bias” (p. 107). The state is an item for exploitation and responsibilities “are de-emphasized while rights are squeezed out of the civic public (*colonial public/state*) with the amorality of an artful dodger” (p. 107). The ideological underpinnings of these bourgeois groups gives “credence to the myth among the ordinary African that the civic public can never be impoverished. On the other hand, the primordial public is pictured as needful of care – in fact from the civic public” (p. 108).

The highly schooled African, citizens of these publics, contribute to both the alienation and prominence of the colonial public (state) and the original public respectively. On the dialectic of these publics, Ekeh (1975) holds that:

The dialectical tensions and confrontations between these two publics constitute the uniqueness of modern African politics. A good citizen of the primordial public gives out and asks for nothing in return; a lucky citizen of the civic public gains from the civic public but enjoys escaping giving anything in return whenever he can. But such a lucky man would not be a good man were he to channel all his lucky gains to his private purse. He will only continue to be a good man if he channels part of the largesse from the civic public to the primordial public. That is the logic of the dialectics. The unwritten law of the dialectics is that it is legitimate to rob the civic public in order to strengthen the primordial public. (p. 108)

The consequences of the amoral relationship are undesirable and Figure 1 attempts to illustrate the superficial relationships existing among state institutions in Ghana. People devise schemes to abuse the state due to the perception that it fails to serve the interests of society. This initiates an asymmetrical relationship against the state and excessive dependency on the state, hurting it by low productivity, and an abuse of state facilities and properties. In Ghana, the mantra is, “It is for the state, don’t worry”.

On the dialectics of wrong and right in these publics, Ekeh (1975) states that, although there is severe punishment for amorality in the original public, its members justify amorality in the colonial public:

Strange is the Nigerian who demands bribes from individuals or who engages in embezzlement in the performance of his duties to his primordial public. On the other

hand, he may risk serious sanctions from members of his own primordial public if he seeks to extend the honesty and integrity with which he performs his duties in the primordial public to his duties in the civic public by employing universalistic criteria of impartiality. (p. 110)

In Ghana, the amorality is termed as “having a share of the national cake”. Figure 1 demonstrates state institutions having quite a mutual relationship with the state due to immediate control. Even so, the institutions do not always act in the best interest of the state. It is therefore not surprising that Ghana receives not more than 5% royalties from its gold extraction (PriceWaterHouseCoopers (PWC), 2014; Ayi, ND).

Elsewhere, Ghana’s former President John Mahama (2010–2016) highlights the role of neo-colonial institutions in Africa. He accuses the World Bank and International Monetary Fund of compelling African governments to abandon farming subsidies, although the practice continued in the West:

Indeed African agriculture was affected in the 70s by the policies of the World Bank and the IMF. They came with policies that said that we should allow the farmers to compete. We were made to remove subsidies...while they continued subsidizing farmers in the Western countries. The African farmer was left to himself. (Andoh-Appiah, 2014)

It is the awareness of these neo-colonial realities that must instigate a rethink of governance systems in Ghana. Furthermore, the arrow in Figure 1 depicts the siphoning of resources (SoR) out of society – a recognition of neo-colonial agencies. While Nketsia (2013) says the highly schooled African is in a dilemma between two worlds, Ekeh (1975) suggests that, “the simultaneous adaptation to two mentally contra posing orders” (p. 100) creates collaborative attitudes of the highly schooled African. Ekeh continues, “The Western educated African was a greater victim of their intensity than the non-literate African” (p. 101).

Anti-colonial theory (Simmons & Dei, 2012) suggests to people with colonial power to initiate decolonisation through conscientious acts and accountability. Kempf (cited in Simmons and Dei, 2012) suggests “dominant bodies must work primarily against the oppression by which they are privileged and in which they thus participate” (p. 76). This, I believe, would thwart

the violence that Fanon (2004) attributes to decolonisation. Besides, it is imperative for the highly schooled to be cognisant of this potential violence, and not be seduced by the perceived ignorance of the masses. As Fanon (2004) suggests, the powerful will “discover the strength of the village assemblies, the power of the people’s commissions and the extraordinary productiveness of neighborhood and section committee meetings” (p. 11).

Ekeh (1975) espouses that African politicians derive their legitimacy from colonialism to conveniently serve the European coloniser. The acquisition of the coloniser’s values certified highly schooled Africans for governance so, “The ‘fight’ for independence was thus a struggle for power between the two bourgeois classes involved in the colonization of Africa” (p. 102). It was intellectually inept for the African bourgeois not to fault the colonial structures but those who managed it:

The intellectual poverty of the independence movement in Africa flows from this fact, that what was involved was not the issue of differences of ideas regarding moral principles but rather the issue of which bourgeois class should rule Africans. The colonizers did resist a great deal by discrediting the African bourgeois class and by creating divisions within it. In the long run, however, it is the African bourgeois class which had the advantage in the struggle by persuading the lay African that it had finally acquired the charismatic qualities with which Western education endowed its recipients. (p. 102)

A former President of Ghana, Jerry John Rawlings (1981–2000), supports the amoral relationship to the state, noting that abuse of state institutions weakens and makes African democracy fragile. The relationship has prevailed because African values do not conceive of current notions of democracy in Africa:

Our societies are borne out of a strong traditional political framework of monarchies that wielded both spiritual and political power as well as judicial authority. Many of these societies still look up to traditional authority for moral fortitude while our “imported” democratic and secular leadership is seen unfortunately as synonymous to immorality and corruption. With such perceptions how do we expect our emerging democracies to evolve? (p. 2)

The mistrust, frustrations and hopelessness leads to both threats of civil unrest and conflicts that destabilise societies.

## **Democracy in Ghana**

Despite the vague conceptualisation of a democracy, Ghana is touted as a beacon of democracy in Africa. Jerry Rawlings, the President who ushered Ghana into the current democratic identity, agrees to the multifaceted nature of democracy and the difficulty in its conceptualisation. Democracy to Rawlings (2013) must involve effective participation and representation of all citizens in governance – democracy is not all about elections:

A government, irrespective of its mode of appointment, which gives ear to the people and approaches decision-making and policy implementation from a human-centred and continued consultative process is closer to democracy than a duly elected government that fails to consult and also treats the opinion of the legislature – the elected representatives of the people – as of little value. (p. 1)

Rawlings continues, “We have adopted democracy from the textbook without recognising and appreciating the intrinsic values of democracy in our own culture”. The nature of Western democracy adopted by Ghanaians suffocates “the respect and values inherent in our culture, which allowed for people-centered participatory democracy and communication. The window to breath sense into our everyday lives has been forcefully shut” (Allotey, 2016). Rawlings (2013) disagrees with the assertion that Ghana became democratic in 1992 because democracy already existed. Events in 1992 ushered in a constitutional regime but it “is not necessarily synonymous with democracy. That is why we have a number of leaders across the world who are practising constitutional dictatorships. I must emphasise that this is not unique to Africa” (p. 1).

According to Ekeh (1975), H.E is vital to the advancement and liberation of Africa but identifies conflicting notions of H.E that are problematic and inimical to Africa’s development. H.E is considered a “guarantee to success” instead of an “avenue to success” (p. 105). Ekeh thinks the highly schooled accepts this outlook because it subdues the authority of traditional African systems of governance and legitimises the highly schooled to govern, particularly when many traditional African leaders lack Western education (schooling).

Asante (2006) argues that dominant persuasions often influence systems of education; hence a colonised society begets colonial education. Accordingly, there is the tendency to use the school as a basis to legitimise leadership. “Education normally follows the dominant political lines in a country where you have colonial political principles you will find colonial education. If you have the vestiges of past colonial practices, you will see those practices reflected in the educational system” (p. x).

The need to decolonise H.E in Ghana is vital due to its connection with governance, leadership, public and civil service and other important sectors of society. The interplay between H.E and governance espoused by Asante (2006) and Ekeh (1975) has been evident since the struggles for independence in Ghana. However, Ghana has experienced five coup d’état post-independence due to soiled relationships between leadership and citizenry. These coup d’états have largely been borne out of disenchantment by citizens. However, accusations have been levelled at the West for toppling African governments. Rawlings (2013) for instance says:

As a continent we cannot look on while elected Presidents are plucked out of their countries and humiliated in such a crude manner. Some of us chose to blame Laurent Gbagbo and Gaddafi for the fate that befell them. We are equally to blame for looking on as the global powers entered our continent and virtually staged coups in our countries. (p. 2)

Although Ghana enjoyed some political stability through the 1980s, 1992 to date marks the longest period of constitutional rule. Even so, there are visible signs of discontent due to disheartenment and disappointment in the political system. The influences and activities of institutions like the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank (WB) tend to reinforce the neo-colonial agenda. Rawlings (2013) articulates that the IMF and WB endorse and advocate “democracy” across the globe based on unattainable outcomes:

The biggest misconception in embracing democracy is the argument that it comes with economic progress. The Western sponsors of democracy and their allied institutions such as the IMF and the World Bank who offer democratic prescriptions with the promise of financial support for socio-economic development usually present such arguments. (p. 2)

Commenting on the collaborative nature of a world economic system to exploit, Rawlings (2013) states that:

An African think-tank recently reported that illicit financial outflows cost the continent between \$38.4 billion and \$25 billion between 2008 and 2010 respectively. ...While there may be a lot of factors that enhance corruption, including the connivance of major global international players, whose jurisdictions ironically exact huge penalties for white-collar fraud – Africa is primarily saddled with corruption because some members of a minority elite connive to rape the continent and ensure that the positive economic indices are only on paper and do not reach the pockets of the ordinary people at the grassroots. (p. 4)

Rawlings (2013) further shares his sentiment on social inequalities and unbalanced social justice:

...we live in countries where poor, petty thieves get imprisoned for several years while businessmen who evade taxes in millions of dollars or a politician who misappropriates millions of state funds escape punishment. These inequalities are recipes for the retrogression of our democracies and we cannot allow the negative tide to continue. As I said earlier, a democracy that cannot provide socio-economic justice cannot be a healthy democracy and will remain vulnerable and fragile. (p. 4)

Overall, Rawlings contends that Ghana has “adopted the worst out of the West” and that:

The West is today getting a taste of the weaknesses of multi-party democracy that we have to put up with in our part of the world. While our old traditional culture of democracy was able to contain such weaknesses, the Western multiparty democratic practice appears almost incapable of containing corruption in its various forms (Allotey, 2016).

There are two dominant political parties in Ghana. The ruling party defends policies whilst the opposition opposes. Partisan interest has supplanted national interest. Democracy in Ghana has become the new “divide and rule” and threatens social stability. Nkrumah (1973c) argues that democratic principles and practice transcend a mere technique. However, colonial Western

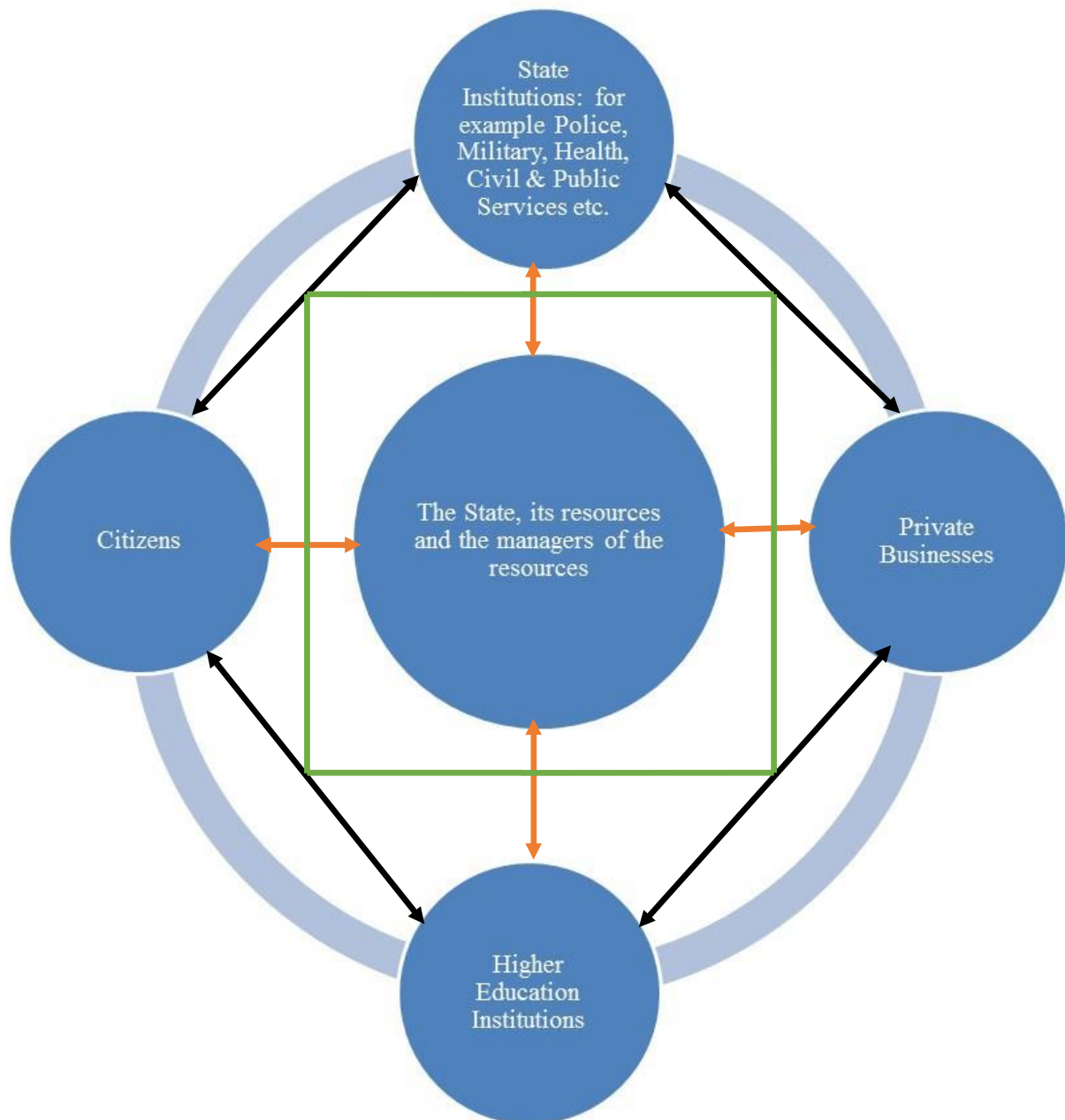
education that trains Africans for subservience, extinguish democratic traits. In a speech at the United Nation's General Assembly, Mahama, a former Ghanaian President, counsels that, "Democracy is not a one size fits all system; different countries are at different stages of the democratic journey. Democracy evolves and cannot be forced on the people. It doesn't help for [the] biggest powers to go proselytizing democracy across the continent" (Allotey, 2016).

In relation to Ekeh's two publics, political parties have assumed the role of the original public although ethnic associations also influence political allegiance. In Ghana, it is becoming a trend for people to hold stronger allegiance to political parties than the state. This unhealthy social relationships attract the attention of Mr. Kwabena Agyapong, then-General Secretary of opposition New Patriotic Party (NPP) – the NPP forms the current government in Ghana. Delivering a solidarity speech at the 8<sup>th</sup> delegates congress of the then-ruling National Democratic Congress, Mr. Agyapong advocated for matured politicking and prioritizing the needs of the masses. He encouraged liaison between politicians and political parties premised on decency, maturity and nationalism due to the dwindling trust in politicians. Mr. Agyapong encouraged the ruling party to elect leaders who would help propel Ghanaian cultural values of respect and truth and advocated for the rejuvenation of love for country. Politicians must do more to serve society on the tenets of altruism and sacrifice since political leadership is a privilege. Politicians must exude tolerance, honesty and discipline to restore optimism in the country (Ali, 2014).

### **Anticipated Decolonised Social Relationships**

With a decolonised attitude, the expected relationship that should exist between the state, its institutions and citizens is in Figure 2.

Figure designed by the researcher



**Figure 2**  
*Social Relationships with a Decolonised Mentality*



As presented in Figure 2 with the attainment of decolonisation through H.E in Ghana, there should be a great sense of belonging for all citizens and a sense of community. In such a situation, the state would tend to work in the interests of society, altering prevailing distrust into faith and confidence in the state. Moreover, a decolonised mindset would facilitate the creation of effective governing systems at all levels to hold people in positions of trust accountable, as prescribed by Simmons and Dei (2012). As illustrated in Figure 2, such conditions would tend to initiate the much-desired symmetrical relationship among different areas of society. The over reliance on the state is likely to reduce and the “Pull Him Down Syndrome” (PhD syndrome) (an act and art of ensuring people do not progress), would possibly give way to constructive thoughts.

## **Conclusion**

In this chapter, we have been discussing the complex challenges of colonial relationships. In Ghana, colonial relationships manifest politically, socially, economically, and aesthetically. Contemporary systems of governance in Ghana need re-examination to ensure worthy social relations due to an amoral outlook attached to it. I acknowledge the factors that bestow these challenges are both internal and external, however the former must be halted in order to offer a foundation to attempt to confront external ones. The sustenance of the colonial and re-colonial relations, as Ekeh argues, is a result of the notion that H.E is a guarantee to success and governance of the African masses.

The next chapter presents the summary and conclusion of the research.

## **Section Six: Concluding Chapters**

### **Chapter Thirteen: Conclusion, Contributions and Implications of the Study**

#### **Introduction**

In this final chapter, my aim is to succinctly summarise the study. I will also illustrate the contributions of my research to the body of knowledge in the area of decolonising H.E in order to make it serve a public purpose in Ghana. Specifically, the chapter highlights that colonial attributes are not necessarily a north–south or “white–black” relationship but fundamentally a mindset and worldview perpetuated through different forms of socialisation – in this case, Ghanaian H.E. As the study demonstrates, exclusive notions of belonging and superiority (attributes the study theorises as colonial) describe the highly schooled in Ghana. This therefore sustains the colonial heritage. The study further contributes to scholarship on colonialism and its guises, and decolonisation, anti-colonialism and post-colonialism. Although the implications of the research are varied, they intersect and fundamentally interrogate the notions of Ghanaian H.E, particularly questions that border on what is education, why education and how to construct Ghanaian H.E. to be more meaningful to serve a public purpose.

#### **Conclusion**

This research emerged from an interest to decolonise H.E in Ghana. The study is driven by the question: “How can H.E in Ghana serve a public purpose?” The findings demonstrate that the epistemological, ontological and axiological outlooks of Ghanaian H.E are largely foreign (Western) and tend to demean traditional African perspectives and outlooks. These worldviews become the bases for elitism – a process where the highly schooled elevate themselves above their society. Although notions of elitism in Ghanaian H.E are not as prominent as it used to be, the privilege accorded Eurocentric worldviews and “restricted” nature of academic programmes like Medicine and Business Studies sustains notions of elitist. Furthermore, despite the dwindling prospects of economic advancement, H.E in Ghana remains a springboard and the sole basis to define the highly schooled. The notions of exclusivity, superiority and difference aggregate with the economic aspirations of the highly schooled and bestow a sense of entitlement over those without H.E.

The findings also indicate that H.E in Ghana presents African knowledge systems as intrinsically invaluable unless framed or justified within or as complementary to Western knowledge systems. The disconnection between H.E and society thwarts the ability to create usable knowledge to diversify sources of funding for H.E in Ghana. Additionally, the study disclosed the mislaid conceptualisation of the educated and the inappropriate purposes of Ghanaian H.E makes the future possibilities bleak. While not all is lost, any hope for a constructive future depends on the decisions and paths H.E institutions and stakeholders employ. Overall, the study asserts that H.E in Ghana must be localised, based on African knowledge systems and realities to relate meaningfully to society to serve a public purpose.

### **The Contributions of this Study**

The study contributes both theoretically and empirically on discourses of colonialism, post-colonialism and decolonisation in Ghanaian H.E. The study argues that the colonial schema and philosophy are self-seeking and any form of H.E constructed within such a worldview is inclined to defeat the public cause. I have illustrated in Chapters Four and Five how the process of education in Ghana confers colonial attributes (notions of exclusivity and difference and sense of superiority) to its beneficiaries. The respondents largely agreed that H.E at present is not meaningful and relevant to the needs of the Ghanaian society.

Theoretically, the study contributes to the understanding of how to conceptualise the “colonial”. It argues that colonial traits are not strictly a “black–white” phenomenon but a set of attributes infused into systems of socialisation, in this case, Ghanaian H.E to preserve self-seeking socio-economic and political systems. The need to interrogate colonial guises offers a path to confront colonial and recolonising relationships. Universities being products of colonialism and agents of socialisation, there is a need to constantly interrogate their actions.

In addition, the theoretical design employed in this study illustrates that to confront colonialism requires theories that easily translate into praxis. In this instance, I employed the anti-colonial theory by Simmons and Dei (2012) because it offers more agency. The worldview that colonialism is historical seems to sustain colonial traits through systems of socialisation such as H.E. Intriguingly, H.E in Ghana is seen as the means to liberate and advance society.

The study adds a Ghanaian perspective to the literature on decolonising H.E at a time when decolonising H.E seems to lack attraction and interest from researchers and policy-makers. The consequences of the research offer ideas, principles and conceptualisation that can be tapped into by other African nations because as Sawyerr (2004), a former General Secretary of Association of African Universities, states, the colonial philosophy and principles of H.E across Africa were similar, whether English, French or Belgian.

The theoretical and empirical analysis of the study elucidate the profound yet insidious psychological effect of colonialism on Ghanaians. Privileging Eurocentric worldviews as modern and demeaning African perspectives as backward is bound to keep the highly schooled Ghanaian culturally confused as it deprives them of knowledge of Self. Furthermore, the circumstances sustain the “mental enslavement” of the highly schooled Ghanaian. Until African perspectives are valued in Ghanaian H.E, the psychological consequences will persist. It is important to add that psychological emancipation requires long-term arrangements, for instance, presenting a more appropriate historiography of the past.

The empirical aspect reveals the need to decolonise H.E in Ghana. It also illustrates some emergent specific measures public universities are employing to achieve a public purpose. This is particularly prominent in the accounts of Council-Chair that students are introduced to the community at the outset of their studies and that there is an establishment of centres for traditional African medicine.

Lastly, this study has the possibility to contribute as a tool for re-orientation, introspection and self-review for educators, policy makers and implementers in H.E in Ghana in the never-ending contemplation on decolonising H.E.

### **The Implications of this Study**

This study has implications for Ghana’s education generally and H.E particularly. The study demonstrates that, despite the reforms and reviews in education in Ghana, the highly schooled are constructed through Western worldviews that privilege and exhibit Western values and attitudes. In the short term, the study is inclined to inform the concept and practice of H.E. In the long term, the goal is to decolonise H.E in order to enhance political, social, and economic dynamics and relations in Ghana.

Fundamentally, questions on the why, what, and how of Ghanaian H.E arise for immediate consideration. On “Why H.E in Ghana?”, the results indicate the need for H.E to nurture leaders to ensure social stability, cohesion and transformation based on culturally relevant and prescribed ways of socialisation with room for worthy influences from other jurisdictions. Regarding what is education and the educated? Conceptions in this respect should not be restricted to possession of an academic qualification/s but the possession of values that enhance the humanity of a person to make them active citizens. In respect of how to construct H.E, Ghanaian H.E must integrate with the affairs of society to establish a desired mutual relationship; it must be pragmatic and society-centred. The study of classical African civilisations and history from African perspectives must be compulsory for all students.

Another implication for university administrators, lecturers, policy drafters and implementers, the Ministry of Education and National Council for Tertiary Education in Ghana is that current outcomes of H.E in Ghana fail to provide relevant and meaningful knowledge. By knowledge, I am referring to the dynamics of global socio-cultural, politico-economic relationships and the circumstances and state of the African in these relationships. Despite the predominant discussions on globalisation among the highly schooled in Ghana, the study indicates a seeming lack of a comprehensive understanding that the current neoliberal “global village” is a continuation of the historical globalisation (colonialism). In this instance, there is a greater participation of indigenous actors. It may be appropriate to mention that the elevation of globalisation has not halted the marginalisation and negative signs and symbolism associated with Africans. The study points to Africans to accept themselves to become captains of their fate and masters of their destiny for agency.

The study shows that the subliminal colonial construct of H.E in Ghana as an industry solely focused on personal economic advancement remains robust. The implication for stakeholders (mentioned in paragraph 2) in H.E is to restructure H.E for economic self-sufficiency; social equity; cultural affirmation; and political strength shaped predominantly in traditional African constructs.

A further implication of the study is the need for a deeper interrogation and understanding of colonialism in Ghanaian scholarship. Interrogating colonialism is not an attempt to play the blame game but an enterprise to disassemble and comprehend colonial traits, manifestations and consequences to confront the insidious negative psychological effects that instigate the

apparent self-hate among Africans and notions that African cultural perspectives are unworthy. Appropriate knowledge tends to help transform consciousness and the need to introduce Ghanaians to historical truths as early as possible to help them know and appreciate themselves.

The conception of the beneficiaries of H.E in Ghana as “examination passing machines” has the potential to degrade the primary purposes of various arts. Lawyers are seemingly not educated with the fundamental aim for justice, physicians are not schooled in the art of medicine primarily as healers, and teachers are not in education primarily for the love and dissemination of knowledge but for money. Accordingly, products of H.E have essentially become administrators of the colonial socio-economic and political systems they try to escape.

Overall, this study has the potential to provide guidance for H.E in Ghana. The basic philosophical questions of what is education, how does education take place and who the educated person is could be applied from a policy level discussion in higher education. As Tonah (2009) says, “The search for an ‘ideal’ education system for Ghana has, however, remained illusive [sic]” (p. 45). Furthermore, when applied to both policy spheres and practical delivery in universities the various conceptualisation frameworks within this study (like community service oriented values) can help in the decolonisation project.

### **Some Practical Approaches towards Decolonising the Mind and Higher Education in Ghana**

“The most potent weapon in the hands of the oppressor is the mind of the oppressed” (Biko, 1978 p.68).

Any attempt towards a decolonisation process without an appropriate conceptualisation of colonialism is bound to be wide-ranging, haphazard and unfocused. It is with this background that this study has conceptualised colonialism as acts that “reinforces exclusive notions of belonging, difference and superiority” (Principe cited in Dei, 2006 p.3), which leads to imposition and domination (Simmons & Dei, 2012). Similarly, decolonisation as earlier suggested in the theoretical framework of the study must adopt these paths:

1. The awareness that the knowledge base of Western H.E does not empower the African being as they are objects in the learning experience;

2. A de-construction the prevailing unworthy notions, ideas and positions on Africans;
3. Re-construction of worthy ideas, notions and perspectives based on African worldviews and making Africans the subject of education.
4. For Africans, as Dei (2006) suggests, “decolonization involves a reclamation of the past, previously excluded in the history of the colonial and colonized nations” (p. 1).

Decolonisation among many other things require restoring the dignity of African perspectives and worldviews in Ghana’s universities. With these foundational thoughts on colonialism and decolonisation, I propose some practical steps towards decolonisation of the mind and H.E in Ghana. The process operates at three main echelons – Personal, Institutional, and Governmental Levels, though each level is not exclusive.

### **Personal Level**

The process toward decolonisation of H.E and society generally requires a lot of thrust by people who hold this conviction. As aforementioned in the study, the colonial agenda towards Africans was to inferiorise them in order to justify enslavement and subsequent colonialism. To this end, there were destructions and deliberate distortion of African history. There is therefore a significant amount of ignorance on knowledge of and about Africa and in this respect, a more appropriate history of the past becomes crucial towards recapturing the African mind and reclamation of the African heritage. It is only an education of Africa that can liberate Africa/ns. Activists of and for decolonisation must embark on a crusade to share their knowledge and expertise (these are usually not taught in schools) about Africa to help Ghanaians have a valuable knowledge of self to nurture an appreciation of self. This would further extend the conversation on the need for decolonisation and help others nurture that consciousness. Exposure to these scholarship through structured academic engagements and other formal and informal settings would inform Ghanaians that the humanity and equality of Africans is neither constructed on religious imaginations nor liberal sentiments but tangible historical reality. I hasten to caution people who advocate for decolonisation to be cautious and not appear overly aggressive in their deliberations with Ghanaians/Africans because some of the knowledge they may share might confront the foundations of the belief systems of many people. For instance, telling the average Ghanaian that, the story of Adam and Eve in the Bible is a mythological tale may cause an individual, irrespective of her/his schooling, to be unwilling to further engage in such a discussion. Tact is crucial towards sharing knowledge towards decolonisation.

Activists of decolonisation must endeavour to create think tanks, study groups, and other social organisations that would offer critique through seminars and other forms of discussions in different spaces using the traditional and social media to expose and confront the colonial schemes that inferiorise African. A classic example happened in late October 2017 when a group of Ghanaians used Facebook and Twitter to launch a #PullItDown campaign against a Nivea cream that had the slogan “for visibly fairer skins” on its billboards (it sought to tell dark skin tone Africans to use it for “fairer skins”). Nivea had to take down those billboards. The advocates of decolonisation should also live the change they propose. Depending on where the advocates operate (work), they must endeavour to introduce and implement African centred perspectives and awareness. There needs to be a spread of alternative and meaningful knowledge as it remains fundamental to changing thoughts. This must become a missionary activity, a crusade because African centeredness is a state of consciousness.

### **Institutional Level**

The suggestions offered at the personal level transcend that scope into the institutional level. But, at the institutional level, I will locate the cause for decolonisation within the three traditional functions of the university – teaching, research and community engagement activities.

### ***Teaching***

The study indicates a pervasive Eurocentric disposition in Ghana’s universities. It is a basic principle that one cannot teach what they do not know hence there is the need for universities to help create the African centred consciousness. Mapping out these paths rests on the administrators of universities and as Pan-Africanist said in the empirical aspect of the study “If we have a Vice Chancellor who is of that (African centred) mindset, then you would actually see those things take place from the ground up.”

Similarly, Council-Chair asserts that African centred consciousness is yet to consolidate “into a movement that will firmly and broadly replace the Eurocentric approach to H.E. It has gone far in some universities and in some departments but it’s at different levels in different disciplines.” The practical implication towards decolonising the mind is for scholars with his position to share their expertise through various seminars and lectures to woo other people into



their fold and create a critical mass to push for the revolution needed in Ghana's universities. Much of the personal responsibilities aforementioned also tie in with what these scholars must endeavour to achieve. Ignorance is a major reason for Africans' cultural nervousness.

Universities in Ghana must shift the foundations and origins of academic disciplines and scholarship from the present Greek centeredness. Universities must focus and look to Nubia, Kemit and Axum (present day Sudan, Egypt and Ethiopia respectively) as these areas hold significant evidence of Africa's antiquity and where enough evidence abound in any discipline, it must duly be recognised as its origins and taught accordingly. A Ghanaian/African student acquiring the knowledge that ancient Greek scholars like Homer, Plato, Isocrates, Pythagoras and many others were taught by 'Black Africans' in Kemit (Egypt) would aid in redressing the false inferiority attached to Africa/ns. In this regard, universities must stock their libraries with relevant books and materials, and further subscribe to journals that project the African perspectives and consciousness. It also becomes important for universities to scrutinize books donated by "development partners" since much of these books do not bestow the consciousness needed to liberate the African mind.

Academics in universities in Ghana must serve as both experts and neophytes in the education experience in order to unlearn and learn. They must engage students to interrogate and deconstruct colonial Eurocentric ideas and their vestiges with the desire to reconstruct these ideas based on indigenous perspectives. Scholars must do away with wholesale acceptance of Eurocentric positions, provide critiques of Eurocentric science, put forth viable alternatives and introduce African perspectives in teaching and learning experience. This can be done by incorporating language, values, stories, and other teachings that service indigenous society. These would genuinely support self-determination and revalidating the systems of traditional knowledge. Different critiques can be aligned into a coherent theoretical framework for meaningful academic engagements and offer practical solutions and mechanisms for social transformation. Such an experience would help nurture critical minds and universities would be 'institutions of thinking' producing informed and responsible scholars. This is the kind of knowledge required for social movements.

Inter-disciplinary studies and collaborations must be encouraged to help decolonisation in Ghana's universities. For instance, while a medical student may not see the need to study the humanities, the consistent pursuance of courses in African studies for instance would introduce

them to a different history of medicine that far extends Hippocrates. For example, the Edwin Smith papyrus (Edwin Smith is the merchant who is credited to have purchased the ancient Kemit (Egyptian) papyrus in 1862) is the oldest known treatise on surgical procedure. Similarly, an engineering student who takes courses in Museum studies may learn about the mathematical principles in the Rhind and Moscow papyri. These are important foundations to build cultural and self-confidence because Ghanaian students would be introduced to African contributions and or foundations of many academic disciplines. Simply, the arts, humanities and studies which nurture the imagination (from African perspectives) must have predominance in all fields, forms and levels of schooling and education. Schooling and education which only concentrates on a specific discipline to the exclusion of others must be discouraged.

### ***Research***

Universities must encourage the use of Ghanaian/African conceptual and theoretical expositions in research. All research, irrespective of the field of study must have components that illustrates how it influences, sustains and promotes indigenous African knowledge systems. To give thrust to this position, universities' funding and scholarship opportunities should be tied to this focus.

Ghanaian academics should work against their consciously or unconsciously constructed superiority complex, endeavouring to tame their privileged 'whitely' or Europeanised habits, and developing the awareness that other groups in society who are not highly schooled are equally valuable. And their perspectives worth curating and when appropriately understood and engaged in scholarship, it his would help generate indigenous knowledge needed to initiate new ways of doing things and to find meaningful solutions for local problems answers.

It is also important for the research community in Ghana's universities to tap into the global African worldviews in order to accumulate and aggregate conceptual, theoretical and knowledge base for African centred education. Publications with Ghanaian/African impact should be awarded higher scores towards the promotion of academics in Ghanaian universities. Universities must also establish, subscribe and promote journals that have an African focus to serve as a conduit to nurture African centred consciousness.

### *Community Engagement Activities*

The study found that the community engagement activities undertaken by Ghana's universities is not extensive. But in order to mitigate the acts that "reinforces exclusive notions of belonging, difference and superiority" (Principe cited in Dei, 2006 p.3), conferred through schooling, it is important for universities to relate and engage more meaningfully with society. Considering Pro-VC's confession that, "If you sit too long in the university, you find it too difficult to explain society", it does not come as a surprise when Council-Chair says they introduce medical students to the community "early, right from the first year."

Furthermore, a colonial attribute of Ghana's universities is about how universities are structured – the ivory tower mentality. To decolonise this, universities can liaise with the media, especially television and radio stations to disseminate some of their research findings with the larger society – this is not common in Ghana. Town hall meetings and other community engagements towards this end would also be apt. Academics must be encouraged to mellow the use of academic credentials in these proposed discussions to help create a collegial atmosphere for fruitful discussions. These engagements have the possibility of creating a path for society to interact and influence the activities of universities.

It is also important for academics to use simple language when deliberating and interacting with society. Academics should avoid excessively technical language and preferably use local languages depending on the constituency when shedding light on the activities that take place in the university, and disseminating research outcomes.

To a large extent, it is equally the intangible things like the values, conventions and assumptions that underpin how knowledge is conceived, constructed and transmitted to make universities colonial, especially when society is not reflected in the way that the university as a social institution is organised. It is about institutional culture, the symbols that permeate the institutions and the privileging of those symbols. Fundamentally, it is about interrogating the values, traditions, culture that universities privilege. We need to question these things since decolonisation is a demand for inclusion, affirmation, and recognition.

## **Governmental Level**

The government must adopt development concepts rooted in Africa worldviews. The need to seek and collaborate with African diaspora especially those in North America (since they engage in significant research on Africans antiquity and present). Government must lead the course for inter-African (amongst the global African world) and intra-African (among continental Africans) conferences, student exchange and studies in order to help build and make this knowledge base accessible. It must increase funding towards the purchase of literature and other materials needed to stock libraries. These endeavours can prospectively work towards the decolonisation of the African mind and academic landscape. These collaborations would unlock innovation potential of African knowledge, resources and people to assist Ghanaians to create a better future. They would be geared towards innovative and revolutionary thinking, and practical and sustainable solutions.

Structures of governance, particularly the way the country is economically organised and structured must reflect African traditional worldviews. For instance, the Ubuntu concept – meaning ‘I am because we are’ must reflect in governance because at present, governance and leadership across different spheres in Ghana tends to centre on a sense of exclusivity and superiority. The desire is to be served not to serve. And until leaders across society nurture the desire to live like the average Ghanaian, it would be difficult for African structures and concepts of governance to shape leadership. It is important to state that concepts like Ubuntu should not be perceived as static historical ideas but as dynamic concepts embedded with fluid meanings, innovative and futuristic outlooks. In this regard, the government can offer projects to different universities to enhance these concepts with contemporary applicability in fast changing world. The primary focus is to engage it as African philosophical construct to spur ideas towards improved socio-economic relations. Government and its agencies in their supervisory role of universities must enact policies that seek to advance African consciousness and research grants and other subvention must be tied to this goal. Oelofsen (2015) states that the ubuntu cosmology acknowledges the significance of “others, of history, of context and community in the formation of one’s identity, and the inter-dependent relations between individuals and collectives. Recognising inter-dependence and the importance of interpersonal relations for the self, this worldview sees the individual as necessarily socially embedded, and affected by context” (p.141). Certainly, an economic system built on this principle would be less exploitative. It is equally important to mention that, the notion of Africa should not strictly

be constructed only geographically since the African is beyond geographical location. This would help search beyond a specific context for knowledge and adopting concepts.

Furthermore, government must provide incentives such as tax breaks for people engaged in utilising traditional African knowledge and skills to establish and run businesses. Efforts must be made to help them create connections with other people engaged in such ventures across the African world to assist such entrepreneurs expand their frontiers. It would also be worthwhile for the government to create a scheme and or policy where these entrepreneurs would liaise and collaborate with appropriate faculties in universities for both research and work experience opportunities.

The next chapter employs African proverbs to illustrate that African notions of H.E is for the public purpose. Since the study found that African knowledge systems must serve as a foundation to H.E in Ghana, I adopt proverbs as one of the knowledge systems to make a case for public purpose H.E.

## **Section Seven: The Last Word**

### **Chapter Fourteen: African Proverbs as Theoretical Frameworks for a Public Purposed H.E**

#### **Introduction**

The call for the recovery of African perspectives in scholarship provides an opportunity to revisit traditional African ideas and notions needed to shape H.E as alternative perspectives to a space saturated by Eurocentric worldviews. Traditional African life provides the possibilities of extensive theorisation in H.E. These epistemological frameworks have guided education of Africans over the centuries. Avoseh (2013) says:

Every aspect of a community's life and values in indigenous Africa provide the theoretical framework for education. The holistic worldview of the traditional system places a strong emphasis on the centrality of the human element and orature in the symmetrical relationship between life and learning. (p. 236)

The empirical study demonstrates the need to search through African epistemological and ontological constructs to find solutions to African problems and in this regard, proverbs remain a significant knowledge base for African H.E. Tapping into proverbs contributes to bridging the gap between university and society. To Avoseh (2013), proverbs offer theoretical perspectives and “can be used to highlight the power of the spoken word in indigenous African education” (p. 237). Mbiti (cited in Avoseh, 2013) holds that “proverbs and oral traditions as part of the source of the philosophical systems of many African peoples” (p. 238). Simmons and Dei's (2012) anti-colonial theory stipulates that colonised people should seek indigenous knowledge, which supports this chapter. Besides, it is important to bear in mind that the secret to the liberation of the mind resides in cultural realities.

#### **Alternative Paradigms**

Higgs (2008) contends it was expedient for European missionaries and colonialists to argue that Africa had no educational institutions in order to pave way for a Western education

(schooling) enterprise devoid of any African philosophy. The deficit in African perspectives in H.E makes oral traditions indispensable.

According to Avoseh (2013) in traditional African education, ancestral expositions formed theoretical frameworks for education typically at higher levels. These frameworks, based on a combination of human understanding and spiritual experiences laid the path for education – developing good character and active citizenship.

African traditional standpoints on education remain powerful and very relevant in contemporary settings – they feature in daily expression. Proverbs are witty, insightful, nurturing, and promote pride in indigenous knowledge systems.

## **Proverbs**

I tap significantly into proverbs from the Ewe language (pronounced ve-gbe). The Ewes reside in the Volta Region of Ghana. The Ewe language is spoken in the Republics of Togo and some parts of Benin in West Africa. The Ewes, like many groups of Africans, hold a holistic worldview regarding governance, family structure and systems, spirituality, education, religion, issues of morality, and social relations. Similar proverbs permeate different languages and their contemporary relevance provides further proof of their insight, appropriateness, and interminable character. Proverbs are based on years of observation, examination and analysis of nature. This activity qualifies as a scientific venture.

According to Avoseh (2013), in traditional African societies the value of words survives principally in proverbs, therefore the analysis of proverbs features prominently in H.E. To Avoseh, “Proverbs provide foundation for creating objective and useable knowledge, which ensures that individual conduct aligns with community values in line with the dictates of the ancestors” (p. 240).

Africans adopt proverbs in many, if not almost all, verbal endeavours. Proverbs are in great use during ceremonies like naming, marriages, funerals, festivals, and resolution of disputes. Indeed the entire socio-cultural and politico-economic relations of Africans are rooted seriously in indigenous knowledge and the power of word. Therefore, for Africans, proverbs are a repository of intellect for expression of wisdom. In the words of Brookman-Amissah (1986), “an essential aspect of a proverb is its contextuality” owing to its “considerable flexibility in the application of proverbs to situations” (p. 75).

My use of proverbs as an African perspective has a sturdy basis in literature. I draw inspiration from the works of Abubakar (2011); Avoseh (2013); Chilisa (2012); Okoro (2010); and Tagoe (2012) who support the need for contemporary 21<sup>st</sup> century education in Africa to transcend dominant frameworks.

The Merriam Webster online dictionary defines proverbs as “a brief popular saying”, “a brief popular epigram or maxim: adage or a byword”. Oxford dictionaries defines it as “a short, well-known pithy saying, stating a general truth or piece of advice”.

African proverbs reveal, among others, the following characteristics: critical in nature, occasionally abstract, wisdom laden, brevity, real, as well as being the outcome of life experiences, or conferring by means of inspiration (Abubakar, 2011; Achebe, 2008; Brookman-Amissah, 1986; Mustapha, Adebawale, Alagbe & Oyerinde, 2009).

## **The Proverbs**

To Avoseh (2013), in indigenous African scholarship, situations and circumstance play an important role in choosing appropriate figures of speech to identify and accentuate the value of proverbs. Avoseh identifies the significance Igbo people (Nigeria) place on the art of talking; for example, Achebe (in Avoseh, 2013) states that “proverbs are the palm oil with which words are eaten” (p. 238). Avoseh explains that, given the nutritional essence of palm oil in many West African societies, he uses it metaphorically. Avoseh goes on to state, “literarily, proverbs are race horses that words use; and when words are lost, proverbs are used to search and find them. In other words, proverbs go beyond the generic to unearth meaning and provide clarification” (p. 238).

The Ewe say “*megaḍu dze ne akɔ nave wò o*”, which means, “Avoid lots of salt intake to avert chest/heart pains”. These ancient people knew that excessive salt intake creates heart problems. Chilisa (2012) articulates the substance of observation succinctly in Setswana/Tswana (a Bantu language spoken in Southern Africa), saying “*Mafoko amathong*”, which implies “Words are from what you observe” (p. 79). Proverbs offer frameworks that originate from the local environment; they are relevant and easy to relate to. Chilisa (2012) therefore encourages 21<sup>st</sup> century African researchers to “draw from indigenous knowledge systems to theorize about methods and research processes” (p. 100).



## **Humanistic, Ethical, and Civic Nature of Traditional African Higher Education**

Delano in Avoseh (2013) uses the Yoruba proverb “*Bí ará ilé ẹni bá ńjẹ k.k.r. burúkú bí a k. bá tètè sọ fun, hẹrẹhùrù rẹ k. ní jẹ kí a sùn l’óru*” (p. 11). In other words, a person should hasten to warn a neighbour from feasting on harmful insects because the cough that accompanies their subsequent illness would disturb the individual’s sleep. The close-knit patterns of the traditional African residence offer meaning to the proverb. The proverb further illustrates the communal, humanistic, ethical, and civic nature of traditional African higher education. The moral is to be each other’s keeper. The proverb stresses the significance of civic responsibility and devotion to common interest.

### **Sense of Community**

A sense of community or communalism is common to Africans. Traditional African higher education emphasises collective interest because individual liberty is a product of social liberties. Higgs (2008) and Letseka (2000) attest that peaceful coexistence is an essential facet of a traditional African education. Ewes say “*Xe gbee xe dona*” meaning “The bird speaks the language of birds”. Simply put, a person’s identity is a reflection of a communal identity. Mbiti, as cited in Higgs (2008), concisely captures it as “I am because we are; and since we are, therefore I am” (p. 165). Kenyatta (1965) shares similar sentiments saying “according to Gikuyu ways of thinking, nobody is an isolated individual, or rather, his uniqueness is a secondary fact about him; first and foremost he is several people’s relative and several people’s contemporary” (p. 297). According to Letseka (2000), the sense of community is prominent in traditional African life due to mutual inter-dependency of humanity.

### **Togetherness and a Common Sense of Purpose and Collaboration**

The notion of collectivism and collective consciousness in African societies celebrates the idea of togetherness, which translates into a common sense of purpose for agency and action. The Ga people (an ethnic group in Ghana) articulate that “*Anokwale ni dwaɔ many, a wie-e*” – “A truth that can potentially destroy a nation is unspoken”. Ewes say that, “*Asie wɔa nɔvi*” – “Offering a handshake creates affinity”. It is with the understanding that an enemy will not offer a handshake. Kpodonu (2014) employs the Ewe proverb “*Ati deka mewɔna ave o*”,

which means “A single tree cannot make a forest” – no individual is omniscient and an island. These proverbs reiterate the notion that the exclusivity of a person cannot constitute a family or community. The proverbs encourage togetherness, teamwork, and advocates cooperation and unity among people. It teaches against over-reliance on individual efforts. The symbolic interpretation of the proverb suggests there is strength in unity. “*Afɔ meyina nugbe eye atagba tsina afe o*” is a saying in Ewe, which translates as “The foot does not go on a mission and leaves the thigh at home”. This proverb illustrates the interconnectivity of human relationships in society. Human beings need each other to survive effectively in society. The Ewe proverb “*Ne lo lolo vuu hã la, azimevi ko wò nye*” translates as, “No matter how fat a crocodile is, it is still hatched from an egg”, which demonstrates the importance of gratitude and showing respect to parents and elderly in society as well as being humble (Kpodonu, 2014).

A proverb (Ewe) that teaches collaboration is “*ati gɔglɔ dzi wonɔna hafɔ tsoa dzɔdzɔɛ*”, meaning “One should stand on the crooked branch in order to be able to cut the upright one”. The tree in this context symbolises life while the crooked and upright branches portray the challenges life brings. Life comes with challenges; however the solutions depend on collaborating to tap into the expertise of others (Kpodonu, 2014). The Ewe proverb “*kugbe ɣutie wonɔa vu ha me dɔ*” translates as, “You join a dance group for the day you die”. In traditional Ewe communities, people do not join traditional music and dance groups for wages as they largely operate on reciprocity. The concept of reciprocity reflects in many aspects of traditional African endeavours and manifests in contributions towards funeral levies, participation in social functions like funerals, communal labour and other tasks and celebrations. This worldview demonstrates the essence of selfless service. This proverb cautions against commercialisation of life due to the belief that rewards for selfless acts manifest in diverse ways. Commenting on the philosophies and mores of mutualism in African culture, Letseka (2000) highlights a Zulu proverb, “*Umntu ngumuntu ngabantu*”, which indicates, “A person depends on others just as much as others depend on him/her” (p. 182). The proverb emphasises the concept of collaboration. A person succeeds with the help of others.

Kpodonu (2014) expresses the Ewe proverb “*lagla xoxo mefona detsi o*” signifying “Old bones from previous hunting cannot be used to prepare a sauce in the present”. The symbolism is the call for the renewal of knowledge and the need for transformation. Old bones signify obsolete

ways needing transformation. The proverb illustrates the importance and awareness of the dynamism in nature.

Gyekye (1997) shares the foundations of the human ethos in the African community by elucidating that “...in African socioethical thought generally – a concept that animates other intellectual activities and forms of behaviour, including religious behaviour, and provides continuity, resilience, nourishment, and meaning to life – that concept would most probably be humanism” (p. 158).

### **Challenges Associated with Achieving the Public Purpose**

African ancestors were not ignorant of the challenges naturally associated with communalism and selfless service. This awareness is reflected in the Ewe proverb “*koklo be yewo dzrea wɔm gake yewo le ηku kpɔm*” – “Although cocks fight, they are careful of each other’s eye.” The symbolism is that though disagreements are bound to occur in human relationships, it is important not to destroy the relationship and common interests. A similar proverb in Ewe maintains, “*tre eve nɔ tsi dzi megbea wo nɛawo ηu kaka o*”, meaning “Two calabashes floating on water usually touch each other”. The calabash denotes social relationships while water symbolises the environment. Accordingly, human interdependency must guide conflict resolution. People should be tactful in resolving differences (Kpodonu, 2014).

### **Social Expectations**

The support for communalism is neither tolerance of indolence over hard work nor mediocrity over brilliance. Hard work is a virtue instilled from the formative stages in human development in traditional African education. The Ewe proverb “*asi si ke mewɔa dɔ o la, meɖia nu o*” signifies “The hand that does not work does not eat”. So long as an individual strives to work, they will not go hungry. Similarly, the saying that “*Kuviatɔfe agblemee da dzia vi ɔ*” means “It is in the lazy person’s farm that the snake reproduces”. The proverb demonstrates the dangers associated with laziness. Laziness fails to reward and a deeper meaning emphasises the need to connect theory to practice and thought to action. It is not enough to sow but to ensure bountiful harvest. Moreover, a person who constantly depends on others will live wretched.

Ewes say “*zego yibɔ mee akatsa doa go tso*”, which translates as “The porridge comes out of the black”. This also carries multiple meanings but central to its meaning is the call for hard work. Even though the pot may be dirty on the outside, it cooks gracefully. In the same vein, one should not shun dirty jobs so long as it helps eke out a living. The proverb (Ewe) “*Kaletɔ mexɔa tukpebi dɛ dzime o akɔtae wɔxɔ nɛ dɔ*” means, “A hero does not receive a bullet wound in his back but his chest”. The proverb illustrates valour and the nature of bravery laced in traditional African education to face life.

Abubakar (2011) expresses a Swahili proverb “*Elimu ni maisha si vitabu*” meaning, “education is in life and not books” (p. 71). The implication is that learning/education transcends the classroom and that the real issues of life are outside the school. It is therefore important to inculcate everyday experiences as important learning situations. The proverb advocates for relevant education. Reiterating the emphasis on character in traditional African higher education, Abubakar (2011) says in Swahili, “*Muongwana ni vitendo si maneno*” – denoting “A noble man is known by his actions and not by his words” (p. 73).

### **The Multifaceted Nature of Proverbs**

It is pertinent to mention that even though proverbs provide a wealth of resources – including philosophical and theoretical ideas – in traditional African higher education, proverbs are very intricate and may seem to present conflicting ideas. For instance the Akan (an ethnic group in Ghana) assert in Twi that “*Emere nsu yea woyea wuye kwa*”. This proverb frowns on shortcuts to successes in life. However, when taken literally, it means until the appointed time, all efforts are in vain. The lack of its deeper meaning can promote laziness and encourage sluggish attitudes. A person would become idle and wait for that appointed time.

It is also said in Ewe that “*egbe tɔ yehia , etsɔ le Mawu fe asi me*”; the proverb emphasises the need to prioritise tasks and undertake endeavours that require immediate urgency and agency. However, it can also be interpreted as living for the moment and leaving the future in God’s hands – literally, the proverb translates as “Today is essential, tomorrow is in God’s hands”. It is therefore critical to bear in mind the veiled meanings of proverbs and contextual usage earlier mentioned. Abubakar (2011) recommends the contextual usage and interpretation of proverbs.

The complexities of proverbs make it a pedagogical tool in traditional African higher education.

### **The University of Ghana Anthem**

Considering the centrality of public purpose in traditional African higher education, it is not surprising that the anthem of the University of Ghana reiterates the public cause. It says:

Hail University of Ghana  
The nation's hope and glory  
The place that bears the star of peace  
That bids us all to do our best  
Let the great Tower of learning  
Inspire both young and old  
May we proceed in unity to uphold the public cause.

Arise, arise O Legon  
Defend the cause of freedom  
Proceed in truth and integrity to make our nation proud

We ask for strength and wisdom  
As we climb the hill of learning  
May we excel in what'er we do  
As we prepare to face the world  
With a mind ready at all times  
And a conscience quick to feel  
May we proceed in unity to uphold the public cause.

Arise, arise O Legon  
Defend the cause of freedom  
Proceed in truth and integrity to make our nation proud

(Composer: Prof. Emeritus J. H. Kwabena Nketia)

## Conclusion

It is evident from the proverbs that African traditions abhor individualism and self-centredness. African proverbs encourage the common good because of the social nature of humanity. The Ewe's say "*Mawue wə asi gake asibidewo kata mesə o*", which means "*God made the hand but the fingers are not equal*". God makes people unique, hence people have different strengths and weaknesses and thus require collaboration to make society function appropriately. This proverb teaches us to help the needy.

Analysing these proverbs strengthens the need to incorporate African traditions in contemporary H.E to help nurture cultural identity necessary to emancipate Africans. Abubakar (2011) articulates in a Swahili proverb that, "*Mwacha asili ni mtumwa*", which translates to, "He who discards his traditions and culture is a slave" (p. 74). A prompt to Africans that keeping cultural heritage as it occurs within these cultural realities lies liberation.

It is apt to conclude with the Ewe proverb, "*mə sefe ye nye xəme*", meaning "the end of a road is inside a room". The "road" and "room" refer to life and grave respectively – the end of life is death – indicating the mortality of humanity and the need to resist greed (Kpodonu, 2014).

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## Appendices

### Appendix A: Interview Guide



## EDUCATION AND SOCIAL WORK

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SCHOOL OF CURRICULUM  
AND PEDAGOGY  
Te kura o te Marautanga me te Ako

**Epsom Campus**  
Gate 3, 74 Epsom Ave  
Auckland, New Zealand  
T +64 9 623 8899  
W [www.education.auckland.ac.nz](http://www.education.auckland.ac.nz)  
**The University of Auckland**  
Private Bag 92019  
Symonds Street  
Auckland 1135  
New Zealand

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### Title: Rethinking the Philosophical Approach to Higher Education in Ghana

#### Questions:

#### 1. To what extent is higher education in Ghana elitist?

##### *Probes:*

- a. Can you please offer a conceptualisation of elitism in Ghanaian higher education?
- b. To what extent is higher education in Ghana elitist?
- c. What can be done to make the higher education process *proactive*?
- d. How can *Community service oriented values* introduced in higher education.
- e. How can the *sense of privilege* conferred through higher education be translated as *a call to duty /a sense of responsibility*?
- f. How can the pride in the African Self be infused into the higher education process:
- g. through which means can higher education institution and its processes identify with the ‘ordinary person’?

## **2. What are the alternative means of funding higher education in Ghana?**

### ***Probes***

- a. Are there enough resources being pushed into higher education?
- b. Are these funds being channelled in the right areas?
- c. How come cost of higher education keeps rising even though as Ghanaians students don't pay for tuition unless they are fee paying?
- d. How can higher education funding be extricated from the claws of Bretton wood institutions?
- d. Through what other sources can higher education be financed/funded to serve public good?

## **3. What is the possible future of higher education in Ghana?**

- a. In its current state, what is the possible future of higher education in Ghana?

## **4. Challenges**

- a. What are the challenges that have hindered higher education achieving a public cause in Ghana?
- b. How can they be addressed moving forward?



## Appendix B: Participant Information Sheet (PIS)



## EDUCATION AND SOCIAL WORK

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**SCHOOL OF CURRICULUM  
AND PEDAGOGY**  
Te kura o te Marautanga me te Ako

**Epsom Campus**  
Gate 3, 74 Epsom Ave  
Auckland, New Zealand  
**T** +64 9 623 8899  
**W** [www.education.auckland.ac.nz](http://www.education.auckland.ac.nz)  
**The University of Auckland**  
Private Bag 92019  
Symonds Street  
Auckland 1135  
New Zealand

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**PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET (PIS):** reference number: **015787**

**PROJECT TITLE:** RETHINKING THE PHILOSOPHICAL APPROACH TO HIGHER EDUCATION IN GHANA

**Name of Researcher:** Delali Amuzu

**Name of supervisors:** Professor John Morgan, Dr. Kirsten Locke

### **Researcher Introduction**

I am Delali Amuzu and I am a PhD candidate from School of Critical Studies in Education, University of Auckland, New Zealand. My supervisors are Professor John Morgan and Dr. Kirsten Locke.

### **This Project**

I argue that higher education in Ghana displays characteristics of its colonial heritage due to the exclusive notions it confers and its excessive focus on material ends. I seek to find out how higher education in Ghana can be made to serve a public purpose. The research goal is to discover ways in which university education can be relevant and worthwhile to society. This project is part of my PhD thesis and I expect the results to help transform higher education in Ghana. No organisation is funding this project.



## EDUCATION AND SOCIAL WORK

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**SCHOOL OF CURRICULUM  
AND PEDAGOGY**  
Te kura o te Marautanga me te Ako

**Epsom Campus**  
Gate 3, 74 Epsom Ave  
Auckland, New Zealand  
T +64 9 623 8899  
W [www.education.auckland.ac.nz](http://www.education.auckland.ac.nz)  
**The University of Auckland**  
Private Bag 92019  
Symonds Street  
Auckland 1135  
New Zealand

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### **Invitation to Participate**

You are being invited to participate in this research because of the expertise in the area under study. To find potential participants, like you, I have a proxy with insight in the area under study and have agreed to identify you on my behalf.

Your voluntary participation is being sought in the interview phase of my research to enable me gather the necessary data regarding my PhD thesis. You are being asked to give 60 minutes of your time to participate in this interview. You may decline this invitation to participate without penalty. Participation in the study will not be rewarded. However, you can request for a summary of the research.

### **Project Procedures**

I will collect the data by using an audio recorded and later transcribing the interview. I will do the transcription.

### **Data Storage, Retention, Destruction and Future Use**

All data (audio recording and transcripts) will be stored for a period of 6 years with the researcher in The University of Auckland from April 2016. Electronic files will be stored on an external drive and deleted after end of 2022. The transcripts will be stored in a locker and shredded after the end of 2022.

### **Right to Withdraw from Participation**

You have the right to withdraw from this interview at any time without giving reasons. You can request for recorder to be put off anytime during the interview and also opt not to answer certain questions.

However, if you later decide that you want to withdraw your interview data from the research, you can do so until 28 January 2016.

### **Opportunity to edit Transcript of Interview**

Participants will be offered the opportunity to edit the transcript of the interview – between 1st December 2015 and 15<sup>th</sup> March, 2016.

### **Anonymity and Confidentiality**

The preservation of confidentiality is paramount. The information you share with me will be kept with utmost confidentiality. If the information you provide is reported/published, this will be done in a way that does not identify you as its source.

A copy of the research findings will be made available to you, if you wish.

### **CONTACT DETAILS AND APPROVAL**

Student Researcher name and contact details	Supervisor name and contact details	Head of Department name and contact details
Name: Delali Amuzu e-mail: damu820@aucklanduni.ac.nz	Name: Professor John Morgan Department: School of Curriculum and Pedagogy e-mail: john.morgan@auckland.ac.nz Tel: Tel: +64 9 373 7999 eext 46398  Name: Dr. Kirsten Locke	Name: Associate Professor Carol Mutch Department: School of Critical Studies in Education e-mail: c.mutch@auckland.ac.nz  • Tel: +64 9 373 7999 ext 48257

	Department: School of Critical Studies in Education e-mail: k.locke@auckland.ac.nz  Tel: +64 9 373 7999 Ext: 48359	
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For any queries regarding ethical concerns you may contact the Chair, The University of Auckland Human Participants Ethics Committee, The University of Auckland, Research Office, Private Bag 92019, Auckland 1142. Telephone 09 373-7599 ext. 83711.

Email: ro-ethics@auckland.ac.nz.

Approved by the University Of Auckland Human Participants Ethics Committee on ..... for three years. Reference Number 015787.

## Appendix C: Consent Form



## EDUCATION AND SOCIAL WORK

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**SCHOOL OF CURRICULUM  
AND PEDAGOGY**  
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**The University of Auckland**  
Private Bag 92019  
Symonds Street  
Auckland 1135  
New Zealand

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**CONSENT FORM:** reference number: **015787**

**THIS FORM WILL BE HELD FOR A PERIOD OF 6YEARS**

Project Title: **Rethinking the philosophical approach to higher education in Ghana.**

Name of Researchers: Professor John Morgan, Dr. Kirsten Locke & **Delali Amuzu**

Contact email address for researchers: [john.morgan@auckland.ac.nz](mailto:john.morgan@auckland.ac.nz) & [damu820@aucklanduni.ac.nz](mailto:damu820@aucklanduni.ac.nz)

I have read the Participant Information Sheet, and I have understood the nature of the research and why I have been selected. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and have them answered to my satisfaction.

- I agree to take part in this research.
- My participation voluntary.
- I understand that I am free to withdraw participation at any time without giving a reason, and to withdraw any data traceable to me up to 28 January, 2016.
- I understand that data will be kept for [6] years, after which time any data will be destroyed.
- I agree to an audio recording of the interview.
- I agree that if I raise no concerns after the time has elapsed (between 1<sup>st</sup> December, 2015 and 15<sup>th</sup> March, 2016), the transcript would be taken a reflective of my views.
- I wish to receive a summary of findings, which can be emailed to me at this email address:

Name.....

Signature.....

Date.....

APPROVED BY THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND HUMAN PARTICIPANTS ETHICS  
COMMITTEE ON..... FOR 3 YEARS, REFERENCE NUMBER  
015787

## Appendix D: Ethics Approval Letter

Office of the Vice-Chancellor  
Finance, Ethics and Compliance

UoA logo  
The University of Auckland  
Private Bag 92019  
Auckland, New Zealand  
Level 10, 49 Symonds Street  
Telephone: 64 9 373 7599  
Extension: 87830 / 83761  
Facsimile: 64 9 373 7432

### UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND HUMAN PARTICIPANTS ETHICS COMMITTEE (UAHPEC)

29-Oct-2015

#### MEMORANDUM TO:

Prof John Morgan  
Curriculum & Pedagogy

#### Re: Application for Ethics Approval (Our Ref. 015787): Approved

The Committee considered your application for ethics approval for your project entitled **Rethinking the Philosophical Approach to Higher Education in Ghana**.

We are pleased to inform you that ethics approval is granted for a period of three years.

The expiry date for this approval is 29-Oct-2018.

If the project changes significantly, you are required to submit a new application to UAHPEC for further consideration.

If you have obtained funding other than from UniServices, send a copy of this approval letter to the Research Office, at [ro-awards@auckland.ac.nz](mailto:ro-awards@auckland.ac.nz). For UniServices contracts, send a copy of the approval letter to the Contract Manager, UniServices.

In order that an up-to-date record can be maintained, you are requested to notify UAHPEC once your project is completed.

The Chair and the members of UAHPEC would be happy to discuss general matters relating to ethics approvals. If you wish to do so, please contact the UAHPEC Ethics Administrators at [roethics@auckland.ac.nz](mailto:roethics@auckland.ac.nz) in the first instance.

Please quote reference number: **015787** on all communication with the UAHPEC regarding this application.

*(This is a computer generated letter. No signature required.)*

UAHPEC Administrators  
University of Auckland Human Participants Ethics Committee  
c.c. Head of Department / School, Curriculum & Pedagogy

Mr Delali Amuzu  
Dr Kirsten Locke

#### Additional information:

1. Do not forget to fill in the 'approval wording' on the Participant Information Sheets and Consent Forms, giving the dates of approval and the reference number, before you send them out to your participants.

2. Should you need to make any changes to the project, please complete the online proposed changes and include any revised documentation.
3. At the end of three years, or if the project is completed before the expiry, please advise UAHPEC of its completion.
4. Should you require an extension, please complete the online Amendment Request form associated with this approval number giving full details along with revised documentation. An extension can be granted for up to three years, after which a new application must be submitted.
5. Please note that UAHPEC may from time to time conduct audits of approved projects to ensure that the research has been carried out according to the approval that was given.